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JUNE 11, 1932

A

SKETCH

OF THE

POLITICAL STATE

OF

EUROPE,

AT THE BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY,

1805.

By WILLIAM HUNTER, Esq.

AUTHOR OF THE

"VINDICATION OF THE CAUSE OF GREAT BRITAIN,"

AND OTHER POLITICAL TRACTS.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

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A

SKETCH,

&c &c.

EUROPE, in the whole course of its history, has not been placed in a more extraordinary or critical position than that which it actually exhibits. Its first rise, its overthrow, and its re-establishment; the gradual advances of the arts and sciences towards perfection; their decay, and temporary loss; their subsequent revival, and progressive improvement; have all been recorded and explained. These various changes were produced, in the first instance, by the spontaneous exertions of the human mind, which, when not opposed by insurmountable obstacles, proceeds in the career of invention, discovery, and refinement: in the second, by the ruinous influence of riches and luxury, which, in proportion as they were indulged in, rendered mankind unfit for defence against the attacks of a hardy and innumerable race of barbarians, who had been invited to the claim by the certainty of the possession: in the third, by the kindling remains of former know-

ledge operating on the rude manners of the new settlers, reclaiming them by degrees from their uninformed modes of life, and imbuing them with a tincture of those arts which were calculated to place an additional value on their acquisitions.

These causes and these effects are, however, sufficiently apparent; and can be traced, with facility, through the entire range of their operations. Long before these savage hordes issued from their fastnesses in the north, the civilized parts of Europe had been rapidly declining in all those virtues which had occasioned their prosperity. Liberty had been supplanted by despotism; knowledge had been overwhelmed by ignorance. No impulse of public energy or affection remained. Men no longer felt themselves concerned for the preservation of a government from which they derived no personal advantage; and which, whilst it existed, only reproached them with degrading recollections of past times. The true principles of polity and jurisprudence were already abandoned. Political institutions, which, among the ancients, had once been so keen an object of research, had lost all interest in the eyes of the multitude. Successful usurpation had stifled the voice of inquiry. The opulent were immersed in the most effeminate luxuries; the poor were sunk in the

the extremest indigence; a general dissolution of manners and morals prevailed; and all those objects which are most captivating and beneficial to a well-regulated society were stripped of their attractions and their value.

After a lapse of ages, Europe began to recover from the effects of its subjugation, and to assume a totally distinct character. The fierce maxims of its conquerors imperceptibly yielded to the insinuating persuasion of a milder system. The knowledge of the older inhabitants engrafted itself on the unpolished manners and violent passions of its invaders; who, by degrees, perceived the utility, and submitted to the operation, of many of their wiser institutions. The feudal system, which had been founded by the northern conquerors, dividing the executive power among the landholders of a country, their turbulent and haughty spirit was perpetually involving them in petty wars. Out of these domestic broils arose the civil institution of Knight-errantry;* whose generous object being to protect the persecuted and defenceless, evidently tended to soften and reform the ferocious manners of the age. The expansion of the Christian religion was also producing most beneficial effects. It infused the

* Knight-errantry first appeared in Spain about the year 1073.

benignity

benignity and justice of its precepts into the hardened and untutored heart; and created a love of equity, an obedience to law, and a temper of moderation. Even that powerful direction which it gave to the human mind when the population of Christendom engaged in their military expeditions for the recovery of the Holy Land, although attended in many respects with the most disastrous calamities,—yet, by uniting men in one common cause where the motive was glory, honour, and fame, in opposition to worldly interest, it diffused an heroic and social spirit, and generated those sentiments of courtesy, magnanimity, and generous valour, for which that chivalrous age was so singularly conspicuous. The crusades were also productive of commercial effects which were highly advantageous to the industry and manners of the times. They laid the foundation of the greatness of the Venetians, the Genoese, and the Pisans; whose flourishing trade to India through the ports of the Red Sea, restored to Europe the arts and luxuries of the East. Commercial communities, leagues, and corporations, were gradually formed, and gave birth to those municipal regulations which afterwards so essentially assisted in paving the way to civil liberty. The accidental discovery of the Pandects of Justinian about the same time, was another

another most fortunate event. They immediately engaged the eager attention of the learned. Juridical science henceforth became a favourite study; and, in less than twenty years, public lectures on civil law were delivered at the chief universities of Europe.

The numerous corruptions, the superstition, and fanaticism, which where afterwards mingled with the dispensations of the Gospel, and which had been so successfully cultivated by the Church of Rome, were very near once more involving mankind in all their former misery. The usurpations of the priesthood had, indeed, been long extending in every direction, and at last reached a most pernicious and alarming excess. In possession of all the learning of the times, their frauds and menaces easily imposed on the weakness and fears of an ignorant and credulous age. Their design was to release the whole body of the clergy from the civil jurisdiction, and to establish an irresistible power on the ruins of regal rights. Gregory VII. and many of his ambitious successors, issued their anathemas in the boldest language of denunciation and defiance. They provided sanctuaries against the civil power. They excommunicated and deposed princes at pleasure; and the proudest potentates were frequently obliged to humiliate themselves at the feet of these arrogant priests.

priests. As, however, men became more enlightened, the odious vices, the gross impostures, and the enormous abuses, of the Romish Church attracted their notice, and called forth the spirit of animadversion and reformation. Wickliffe in England, and his disciples John Huss and Jerome of Prague in Bohemia, had the merit of taking the lead in this bold undertaking. At length arose Luther: whose daring genius and acute understanding so successfully inveighed against the scandalous usurpations of the See of Rome, that he shook the whole fabric to its foundations; and, in less than thirty years, separated the half of Christendom from its spiritual dominion.

What had eminently conduced to this happy emancipation was the advancement of letters and the arts. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, a taste for painting, architecture, and sculpture, began to revive in Italy. These pursuits gave an elegant turn to the occupations of the mind; and, in the succeeding century, led to the successful cultivation of higher attainments. The discovery of the properties of nitre had occasioned a complete revolution in the military art; and the invention of paper and the mariner's compass, and lastly of printing, secured the triumphs of the understanding. Civil and religious wars, and other public calamities,

mities, retarded the progress of these happy events; but they at length yielded to a more just and a more rational system.

The discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, by the Portuguese and Spaniards, opened a vast field for speculation.* They gave a fresh spur to the efforts of human industry, and the inquiries of the human understanding. Commerce, which, from its hitherto confined state, had hardly attracted the notice of a warlike age, began to awaken the minds of princes to a perception of their true interests. Other sources of power were discovered besides those of military force. The most fatal errors, both in government and religion, were gradually subsiding. An useful and modest desire of investigation was reclaiming the world from many of its grossest absurdities, and diffusing through life a spirit of charity and toleration which was productive of the happiest effects. More enlightened principles of policy arose, and governments were at length convinced that they could be more beneficially employed than in acts of war. The energies and industry of mankind kept pace; and, mutually assisting each other, fresh objects of speculation and inquiry, and unexplored sources of prosperity and wealth, were continually expanding.

* The discovery of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, transferred the lucrative commerce of that productive country from the Arabs to the Europeans.

The sphere of exertion was extended to a new world. The treasures and productions of the western hemisphere were transferred to Europe. What was at first a superfluity, soon became a want; and these wants, being regularly supplied, were paid for by the productive labour of the countries to which they were conveyed. Every state of Europe felt the benefit of the change, and the improvement was regular and progressive.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, the advantage of those maxims which had grown out of a more liberal system of civil and commercial policy, had produced a decisive effect. Europe, in the preceding century, had undergone a visible change. In France and England, Francis and Henry, those rival princes in gallantry, had introduced at their courts the female sex; who, by a less restrained intercourse with society, polished the manners, and gave to the softer passions a refinement and delicacy which had been before unfelt. In Italy, society was already in a high state of advancement. It far outstripped the other parts of Europe in elegant literature, and classical taste. Even the abstrusest sciences were cultivated with success, and the system of Copernicus was confirmed by the experiments of Galileo.

The polemical writers of the seventeenth century called forth all the intellectual vigour of the

the age; and spiritual despotism was at last subdued by religious toleration. Germany, which had been desolated by a thirty years' war, was restored to tranquillity by the peace of Westphalia, which in a manner terminated the religious disputes of Europe. From that epoch every benefit which could be expected to result from the experience and expansion of the human mind, appeared to be approaching towards its consummation. The tumults of war seemed to be at length yielding to the avocations of peace; the principles of internal legislation and federative union were better understood; controversy was carried on, less from the desire of contention than the eagerness of investigation, and the love of truth; and the prejudices between the inhabitants of different countries were giving way to a sense of reciprocal advantage. A general good-will, obtaining among the individuals of distant states, was pointing out the modes of mutual assistance; and, whilst it linked them in a closer union, was awakening them to the contemplation and pursuit of their genuine interests. The happiness and virtue of mankind were increasing with their knowledge. Even war was divested of half its inconveniences and terrors. Opinions, respecting national rights, had undergone a sensible alteration, and the public law of Europe, elucidated and confirmed by the learning and discrimination

of Grotius, was gradually tending to perfection. Prescription had authorized maxims which were calculated to preserve, in the midst of the most furious hostility, many of the blessings of civilized life. Common consent had erected a tribunal to which there was an appeal, and by which a rule of justice was preserved amidst the most violent extravagances of revenge. A prisoner was invested with certain civil privileges; and a vanquished enemy, who was entitled to the charity of a christian, frequently experienced the solicitude of a friend. If death was inflicted, it was from necessity; and mercy, when she could spare with safety, was sure to interpose with success. Law, in most instances, triumphed over force; and the greatest miseries and misfortunes of life were tempered by the dictates of humanity, the rules of justice, or the conclusions of reason.

Such was the promising state of society in Europe half a century ago; when a band of atheists, freethinkers, voluptuaries, and political enthusiasts, sprang up, to produce a total change in public opinion; and, by their pernicious but alluring tenets, to poison the affections, subvert the judgment, shake the belief, and corrupt the morality of mankind. These dangerous but insinuating doctrines had been long secretly undermining the soundest principles and the wisest institutions. They struck at the root of the oldest established

established maxims, and were particularly levelled at subordination throughout every class of society. They ridiculed every acknowledged system of religious, civil, political, commercial, or colonial policy. The people were called upon every where to vindicate their natural rights. Ideas of equal power and equal property were industriously circulated; and were represented with all those arts which were likely to impress, not only the justice, but the facility, of the acquisition. The fascinating nature of the assertion produced an instantaneous conviction on the sanguine hopes of the multitude. They imagined that all these wild speculations were to be carried into practical effect. Strongly as they were addressed to the senses, and applying through the nearest channels to the heart, they were adopted with that enthusiastic zeal which a sentiment of injury, added to a hope of revenge, is calculated to inspire. All the wrongs which had been suffered, all the oppressions which had been endured, were to be instantly redressed; and those who had been exercising the insolence of pride, and the tyranny of power, were to be brought down to the common standard.

It is not surprising that such promises should be readily harboured in the breast. They produced the same effect on the moral world, which a contagious fever produces on the animal world, when the

the malignancy of the disorder, being assisted by the state of the atmospheric air, becomes at once epidemic. The rapidity of the infection left no time for experiment; and, before the remedy could be prepared, the disease was incurable. Other revolutions have generally grown out of accident, and have subsided when their immediate causes have been removed. They have operated rather a change of measures and of men than of principles. But the French revolution possesses peculiarities in its character which distinguish it from every other. It stands forth a solitary example in the history of human transactions. It was a deeply planned and systematic production, created for the purposes of the most intense and extensive mischief, and aiming at the total dissolution of every established maxim, whether of civil, ecclesiastical, or political government. It was anarchy, usurpation and infidelity, supplanting order, property, and faith. It was all the vicious and furious passions of mankind in rebellion against whatever can promote utility, awaken reverence, or confer happiness. Destruction was the main purport; and the means recommended being physical strength, the insurrection was universal.

The advances which Europe had previously made, contributed, in one sense, to its downfal. Men perceived advantages which they wished to

possess, and they imagined that the wish and the possession were identified. The general dissemination of knowledge; the claims of the governed on one side; the concessions of governments on the other; gave rise to the most perilous discussions. These dispositions in opposing parties impressed the people with exaggerated notions of their power. The moment the idea was formed, they aimed at the realization; and that perfection which was placed in distant perspective, they were determined at once to reach.

These sentiments, by anticipating the natural progress of events, were calculated to confound the wisest schemes, and to disconcert the most salutary measures. But so it was. The previous systems of some of the leading powers of Europe had, indeed, very much conduced to dispose mankind for the adoption of these dangerous and incongruous experiments. Their principles of polity had, in a few striking instances, deviated from every rule of tolerance or justice. They had so frequently acted on that most atrocious of all maxims, that *power is right;* that a degree of disgust had been created, which rendered the feelings of mankind highly susceptible of resentment, and greedy for revenge. The operation of partial laws and partial taxation; the domineering haughtiness of the nobles; a total disregard of the rights and comforts of the lower classes; irremediable

remediable confusion in finance; an idea of security at home, resulting from a conviction in the strength of long practised and unresisted abuses; the violence and oppression which were extended to foreign states; these various misdeeds had gradually opened the eyes, even of the unreflecting, to the views of sovereigns, and, in a few glaring instances, had drawn aside the veil which conceals the occult operations of cabinets. Their foibles, their meannesses, and their vices, were betrayed to the gross perception of the vulgar. Men began to argue, not only from speculation, but from what were objects of sense, and to discover that rank alone does not confer either intelligence or virtue. In many countries, whilst the great were secure in their privileges, the purses of the people had been drained, not for the promotion of national advantage, but for the prosecution of injurious ambition or private revenge, or in the maintenance of idle luxury and vitious dissipation. The insolence of power rioted in the violation of law, and the splendour of a court was paramount to the happiness of a people.

The assistance which France impoliticly gave to rebellious America, accelerated her own downfal. The seeds of insurrection which were there so successfully cultivated, were, on the return of peace, transplanted to a more genial soil. The same temper, instigated by other circumstances, displayed

displayed itself among her own people, and at length convinced the government of the foolish eagerness with which they had embarked in that desperate though successful enterprize. America gained her independence: France lost her crown; and not only involved herself, but a great part of Europe, in scenes of misery and desolation, which, after a succession of sixteen years, are still, I fear, distantly removed from their termination.

The object of France was the destruction of Britain. But so short-sighted were her politicians, that, although they succeeded in the immediate plan of their operations, the result has turned out, ruin to her, and increased prosperity to us. The separation of America from this country may be considered as the epoch of our greatness. It relieved us from a dead weight which cramped all our energies, and impeded all our exertions. We escaped the territorial expence, and secured the commercial benefits. Freed from the burden and the anxiety occasioned by those vast colonies, that attention and wealth which their administration required were thrown into more productive channels, and, enabling us to direct our views to more valuable considerations, we availed ourselves of our intrinsic advantages.

A revolution in another part of Europe, which had been also long preparing, and was deeply

concerted, excited, at the time, as much astonishment, and more indignation than that which was drawing towards its accomplishment in France. Whilst the French had been breaking their *chains* from false notions of freedom, three of the leading sovereigns of Europe had been strengthening their *power* by pursuing a more guilty, because a more matured and less hazardous course. That scandalous league, which, at the instigation of Russia, had been formed to deprive an ancient and respectable kingdom of its existence, from no other motive but the love of dominion, backed by strength, and opposed by weakness, was an event which, by being arranged with so much secrecy, and accomplished with so much facility, proved the depravity of cabinets, and the flexible degeneracy of the age. To save Poland no effort was made. One man, indeed, whose name has been immortalized by the splendour of the attempt, though deficient in those commanding talents which were likely to insure success, did, for a moment, rally the broken and astonished spirits of his countrymen. But the memory of Kosciusko was doomed to survive the independence of his country. Without union at home, or political influence abroad, it was totally unable to stem the torrent that assailed it. The three royal conspirators suddenly developing their views, and, attacking

tacking it at the same moment at various points, it was at once prostrate at their feet. Thus was one of the oldest kingdoms of Europe, without a struggle, expunged from its map, and its political existence completely extinguished. Nor could any thing have been more unfortunately timed for the tranquillity of mankind. Those wild and odious principles which were completing the revolution in France, were already in a plenary course of action. The rights which had been assumed by the people of that powerful kingdom, of cashiering and punishing even the legal possessor of the throne, it was evidently the interest of all sovereigns to suppress; and this was one of those cases in which the duties on one side, and the prerogatives on the other, unquestionably tended to the stability of general happiness. But on this afflicting occasion, nothing was consulted but the promotion of personal views, and the gratification of vulgar ambition.* This indefensible act of partition will, however, as long as historical justice dares blame tyrannical perfidy, be arraigned with the invective which it deserves.

* His Prussian majesty, who was less powerful and wealthy than the other two, appropriated the chief part of those sums which were sent from this country to enable him to join the coalition against France, towards defraying the expences which were incurred by the Polish revolution.

Nor are its authors secure. They have lost, in the opinion of the world, more, perhaps, than they have gained in territory; and, as *opinion* is frequently *power*, it is very possible that they may one day have to repent this gross violation of every maxim of moral or political justice. Such deeds live long in the feelings of a people.

Much as Joseph II. had originally resisted the invitation to become a party to the division of Poland, having so easily succeeded, he most readily entered into a second plan with Russia, for the dismemberment of Turkey. This would also have been accomplished, had not the jealousy of England, Prussia, and Sweden, interposed. But so potently did this federation operate against the views of the two imperial houses, that they were not only compelled to desist from the completion of their project, but to restore the conquests which they had made. Joseph delivered up every thing: Catharine retained Oczakow.

The downfall of the most ancient monarchy in Europe, which had, for near fourteen hundred years, acted a conspicuous part under an illustrious line of princes, and which, for near eight hundred years, in one dynasty, had been transmitted in regular and almost undisturbed succession, was destined speedily to ensue these plots of sovereigns.

sovereigns. The French revolution, as I have already observed, had been long preparing, but the shock came before it was expected. Voltaire, Rousseau, d'Alembert, and a few others of the leading lights of the new philosophy, had been, for thirty years before it happened, most industriously employed. They were the chief pioneers, who, with the instruments of infidelity, ridicule, and false eloquence, had carried on their mischievous designs, and had been too successfully undermining religious faith, moral rectitude, and political and civil subordination. They seemed to move all former maxims from their centre; to disturb the very constitution of nature. The confusion of chaos appeared to be again restored, and every thing to resolve itself into its elementary principles. It is not however my business to trace here, even an outline of that dreadful convulsion which is still fresh in our minds, and which, in its fatal progress, has been productive of a greater intensity and variety of misery than was ever before inflicted by the hand of man on suffering humanity. I shall not dwell on that afflicting subject, but proceed to the main purport of this work, and endeavour to trace a short, but I hope distinct, sketch of the political situation, and probable views, of the chief states of Europe.

I shall

I shall begin with the German states, and proceed in regular progression, as they present themselves according to their different ranks.

Among these, Austria still possesses the superiority. How long she may retain it, must depend entirely on her own conduct, and the political connexions which she may form. The ancient federative system of Europe, which watched with such a jealous eye, and such a benign influence, over the political balance, has been totally dissolved by the French revolution. In former times, when France passed her boundaries, the intervention of Austria, or Prussia, or England, could oblige her to return. But these wise maxims, which so long preserved the equilibrium, have been incautiously abandoned, and powerful must now be the union which shall be able to restore it.

Most of the continental states have, indeed, criminally contributed to their own sufferings and degradation. Had they, at any one period of the French revolution, sincerely co-operated, they might have opposed an effectual resistance. But every plan in speculation was defective in practice. Insufficient measures badly concerted, tardiness and indecision of execution, mutual jealousies and dissensions, separate and discordant interests, secret views and treaties, rendered,

ed every scheme, and every movement, and every hope, more or less abortive. In the course of two years, most of those who had originally embarked in the league against revolutionary France, had already deserted the cause. Some, who began by giving it a cordial support, ended by acts of inveterate hostility; whilst others, by withdrawing from the alliance, without declaring any determinate object, occasioned a less visible, but not a less sensitive mischief. The ephemeral rulers of France took advantage of all these fluctuations and distractions among the political powers, and strictly adhered to a plan of operations which was uniform and consistent. By flattering their new converts, they made them instrumental to their designs; and as they felt their strength increase and their danger diminish, the wheedling blandishments of seduction were superseded by the overbearing decisions of controul.

But though others have failed in their duty, Austria has hitherto sustained a great part. That which is to come (for the scene is not yet over) may be more eventful as circumstances may arise, and she may be a chief instrument in rescuing Europe from her degradation, or in sealing her slavery and her shame.

It appears to be a notion strongly prevalent in this country, that Austria, disgusted with her bad success, and exhausted by the efforts which she has already put forth, will relinquish her former views, and yield, without a struggle, to the preponderating influence of France. Such a measure, if adopted, would give a fatal blow to her power, and, finally, to her independence. The enmity of France may be alarming; but her friendship is mortal. Whilst she is an enemy, we are at least prepared to counteract her, by knowing what we have to expect. But unrestrained as she is in her conduct towards others, by any principle of justice or good faith, an alliance is the inevitable forerunner of ruin. Whilst her professions are lulling suspicion, or disavowing activity, she pursues her plans without interruption or risk; and, when we are least aware of our impotency, we find ourselves enthralled. The supposition, that things which have come to pass could never have happened, has already enslaved a great portion of Europe, and is one of the chief sources of the mournful realities which on every side afflict us.

I cannot, however, bring myself to believe that Austria, after the experience which she has had, will subscribe to such an extreme act of folly.

Although

Although she may, for the present, be desirous of standing aloof from action till she has, in some degree, repaired her finances, and recruited her strength, she surely will never allow herself to depart so totally from all prudence and all safety as to enter into close connexion with France. There is, indeed, but one ground of conjecture on which such a supposition can rest, and that is, the rooted aversion which subsists between the houses of Austria and Brandenburgh; a feeling which arose out of the mutual injuries of the seven years war, and which the long period of time that has since elapsed has scarcely been able to moderate. That this enmity, founded on rivalship and jealousy of preponderance, should have prevailed in its fullest extent, whilst these two powers were waging a fierce war, which was aggravated by every sense of injury and motive of revenge, was a natural consequence: that it should have continued to exist from the mere recollection of these events working on national feelings, whilst the dominion of France was confined within its antient limits, and they had little to apprehend but from the exertions of each other, is also easy to conceive: but that it should still operate, in all its force, after it is morally certain, that the increased means of a common enemy are employed to accomplish their mutual destruction, and that so

dire a misfortune can only be averted by a prompt determination to unite in resistance, is a conduct which must be allowed to be at complete variance with every principle of wise or prudent policy.

The French who, very early in their revolution, had seriously suffered from the solitary efforts of the Austrians, were fully aware of the fatal consequences which might attend a cordial junction of these two powers. Their great object was consequently to separate them, nor did they leave any artifice, or invitation, or offer untried, which was likely to accomplish their purpose. Prussia was, for various reasons, more open to seduction than Austria. To Prussia therefore France addressed herself, and, by consenting to her temporary elevation, has succeeded in making her the complete tool of her ambition. The ascendency over an antient rival which Prussia, by obeying the instructions of France, was enabled to acquire, whilst it flattered her pride, seemed to confirm her power. Like her prototype, she was soon betrayed into the most unwarrantable conduct. Her intrigues were conducted with the most disgusting perfidy, and the most overbearing insolence. She not only invaded the electorate of Hanover, and seized on the mouths of the Elbe, the Weser, and the Ems; but, in the direction which she assumed

over

over the internal affairs of the empire, she displayed a still more intolerant and vindictive disposition. The line of conduct, which she had been thus instigated to adopt, was, of all others, the most likely to aggravate the bitterness of past events, and diminish the prospect of future reconciliation. But although, by these measures, Austria may have materially suffered, Prussia has been completely cajol d, and, in proportion as she has severed her interests from those of the empire, she has reduced herself to a state of virtual dependence

This illiberal remembrance of wrong, and spirit of resentment, have thus unfortunately triumphed over every prudential arrangement, and have been attended with consequences which have gone nigh to subvert the religion, the public law, and even the oldest thrones of Christendom. It is, however, to be hoped, that these destructive dissensions will, before be is too late, yield to a sense of common safety; that these fatal errours in politics will be perceived and remedied; and that such puerile motives of alienation will at length give way to more imperative calls. France, indeed, is now become an armed nation, a complete military power, whose political existence depends on the success of her arms. She attacks all her neighbours in rotation, and preserves her usurpations by the obedience which she imposes, and

the contributions which she exacts,. What then but a general league can effectually repel and confine these irruptions, which threaten by turns the existence of every continental government?

Austria, although she, in many respects, suffered very seriously during her late contest with France, also evinced her ability to contend; since, after maintaining her ground for eight years with varied success, it was one fatal and unaccountable battle, lost by casualty, after it had been gained by blows, which drove her from the field.

The battle of Marengo, both as it stands alone, and in its consequences, is certainly one of the most extraordinary occurrences in history. After a long and desperate struggle, the main army of the French was totally defeated, and Bonaparte, who commanded on that occasion, had actually sealed his dispatch, which contained the news of his overthrow. The Austrians were, in full security, reposing on the field of contention from the fatigues of slaughter, and contemplating the laurels of victory. At this moment Dessaix, by a forced march, arrived with a body of 10,000 men. Without suffering his soldiers to halt, he renewed the conflict, and the wreath was torn from the victor's brow. The Austrians were panic struck; they fled in every direction, or laid down their arms; and submitted to be conducted as prisoners by

by those very soldiers whom they had, a few hours before, vanquished. Dessaix fell, like Wolfe, in the very lap of victory, and, like Wolfe, the knowledge of his success divested of its poignancy the blow which terminated his existence. Bonaparte survived to reap the benefits of this sudden turn of fortune. The Austrians surrendered their conquests with a rapidity which has no parallel in the modern history of Europe; and, after having recovered from France, in *six months*, what France had gained, in those quarters, in *six years*, they may be said to have lost it back in *one day*. The peace between the two powers, which followed shortly after, was the consequence of this signal defeat.

That accommodation, however, is declaratory of the opinion which France had formed, as well as Austria herself, of the remaining energies of that powerful state. It shews that they both were aware that she was far from being subdued; but that she had a warlike people and immense resources still in reserve. It proved, on the part of Austria, that, after a long and violent struggle, in which many districts of her dominion had been materially injured, she judged it prudent to yield to the wishes of a loyal people who were desirous of peace. It proved, on the part of France, her readiness to avail herself of her temporary success,

cess, and to conclude, on favourable terms, a contest from which she had severely suffered. It also proved her fear of uniting, and exasperating, the scattered opinions of the Emperor's subjects, by pushing them to extremities; and, above all, her eagerness to be released from opposition and embarrassment on the continent, that she might concentrate her strength, and pursue, with better hope of success, her implacable hatred to Britain.

Since this period, however, circumstances have undergone a most material alteration. England continues as she was, scorning the threats of her antagonist, and reposing, with confident security, under the shield of freedom, on the unshaken foundations of public and private virtue. But France is become to the continent a much more dangerous foe. The same inclination to destroy the independence of Europe still exists; her means are alarmingly increased. Those means, potent as they are, may be still defeated by active and well-judged measures; but woe to the continent, if it do not soon shake off its slumbers, and concert some scheme of common defence, worthy of the prize which may be forfeited or secured!

Austria, although she was humiliated, was not, in point of physical strength or geographical position, essentially weakened by the events of the last war. The Low Countries, it is true, were

severed from her domination; but it must at the same time be recollected, that, whilst they acknowledged her sovereignty, they were a perpetual source of uneasiness, and a frequent cause of contention, which tended not only to disturb the councils, but to consume the strength, of their possessor. The reforming hand of Joseph had occasioned a complete alienation of the affections of his subjects in that quarter, which no subsequent measures of conciliation could remedy. The distance also which separated them from the other hereditary dominions of the emperor, rendered the administration of them more expensive, more precarious, and less useful. These, with his former Italian dominions, he has lost; but he has received in exchange a country, which, if properly managed, is likely to turn to a more profitable account.

By the accession of the Venetian territory, whilst his dominions are nearly as extensive, they are more compact, which is a consideration of no small importance. The fertility, population, and industry of the Low Countries were, no doubt, very conspicuous; but they were so frequently ruined by the operations of hostile armies, and their disaffection to the emperor's government was so unequivocal, that it becomes a very dubious point whether he was either enriched or strengthened

strengthened by the inheritance.* But the Venetian territory, disencumbered of these manifest drawbacks, is likely to yield considerable advantages. He is now in possession of a state, which, standing alone, has made an illustrious figure in arms, in commerce, and in arts; and, although its former splendour can never be revived, its resources are still abundant, and may be again called forth with profitable effect. He has also

* I am only here arguing against the value of the Netherlands, as the Emperor is personally concerned as sovereign of his hereditary states, not at all wishing to diminish their importance as a rampart for the protection of the north of Germany. They have always been considered, and have always proved, a very useful barrier against the invasion of Germany by France. Whilst the French armies were employed in subduing them, which generally cost them one or two campaigns, the states of Germany had time to assemble their troops, and concert their plans of operation. In the hands of the King of Prussia, both in his individual capacity and as a member of the empire, they would be a most valuable acquisition. In the hands of France, they are a most perilous one. Germany is, indeed, at present completely exposed to the hostile enterprises and designs of its aspiring neighbour. Suabia, Bavaria, Westphalia, Lower Saxony, now lie unprotected, and the French may at once penetrate to the heart of the empire. The whole line of frontier, which was formerly its security, is quite broken down. The Low Countries, Holland, the tract of land between the Rhine and the ancient boundary of France, with Switzerland, have all fallen before the fortunes of France. The keys of Italy she also holds.

acquired

acquired a maritime position,* which, as an outlet to the numerous productions of his hereditary dominions, by extending his commercial intercourse and means, may be an exuberant source of future revenue and strength.

Austria, since the peace, has been active in internal arrangements, and has been carefully treasuring up the means of future annoyance. The minute and steady attention which has been lately bestowed on the organization of the troops, the regulation of the finances, and the improvement of the revenue by the imposition of judicious taxes, has helped to remove many great obstacles which before shackled her efforts, and has placed her in a progressive state of preparation for the renewal of hostilities. One alteration also in the administration of her government, from which, in any future contest, she will derive an incalculable advantage, is the suppression of the Aulic council of war, by whose impolitic interference the operations of her generals, in former times, were seriously impeded. It was indeed the absurd powers entrusted to this body which, in many instances, were the visible cause of those reverses which attended the Austrian arms. The wisdom of councils may still repair her misfor-

* Austria has already a few frigates, and a fleet of corvettes, mounting from twelve to eighteen guns.

tunes. The Archduke Charles, one of the greatest heroes and acutest minds of the age, has now acquired a complete ascendency. The faction, which, for so long a time, successfully opposed him, and thwarted all his designs, has been dispersed: and as no man better understands the interests of his country, or is likely to be more zealous in promoting them, it is not to be supposed that he can feel any disposition to form a close connexion with the government of France. From such a connexion his generous and gallant spirit must naturally revolt, as well from the recollection of past injuries as the apprehension of immediate and remote consequences.

The Emperor's assumption of his *new* title is a puerile piece of parade, which might as well have been omitted, of little consequence to himself, of no consequence to any one else. But if he be desirous of preserving his *old* title, and the real splendour and dignity, and high rank, which are attached to it, and which are consecrated by the revolution of ages, there is apparently but one possible mode of insuring success—that is, most cautiously to avoid any intimate intercourse with France; to preserve, with firmness and moderation, his remaining rights; if he cannot restore, to endeavour to maintain what is still left of the antient order of things; to resist, in the outset, every

every encroachment or insult; and to embrace the first favourable opportunity of reducing the power of a restless and intolerant neighbour, and of retaliating the wrongs which he has already endured.*

* Nothing can have more powerfully conduced to confirm the suspicions, and to embitter the enmity, of Austria against France, than the affronting and scornful manner in which she has been treated by that power since the period of peace. Every principle of honour, justice, or decorum, has been scandalously violated, and every important provision or restrictive engagement, contemptuously departed from. By the treaty of Luneville, France, in consideration of what she acquired, formally renounced all future interference in the governments of the Batavian, the Italian, and the Helvetian republics, nor was she at all to intermeddle in the direction of their affairs. But instead of observing these solemn stipulations, for which Austria had been induced to make such ample sacrifices, under various pretences, the French troops were either not withdrawn, or were soon again introduced; and although the nominal sovereignty remained with these different states, all the real strength, and resources, and influence, were completely reserved by France. As soon as the preliminaries of peace were signed with Great Britain, she acted a less evasive and hypocritical part. The government of the Italian republic, the limits of which were left undefined, was instantly seized; and Holland and Switzerland were, to all intents and purposes, again reduced to provincial obedience. Savoy, Piedmont, and the county of Nice, which had never been ceded by treaty, were definitively annexed to France; and Etruria, Liguria, the Papal territory, and even Naples, have been placed in a state of complete impotence: so that, with the exception of Venice, she may in fact be said to exercise her sovereignty

Austria, although she has sensibly declined in consequence, yet, from the extent, population,

vereignty over the whole of this once illustrious isthmus. To all these encroachments and insults have been accumulated the seizure of Hanover, one of the principal co-estates of the empire, various acts of tyranny and aggression towards several of the inferior principalities, and, above all, the proceedings relative to the secularization of the empire, and the indemnities to secular princes. These various infractions of the treaty of Luneville were at the time sanctioned by Russia, who was then desirous of weakening Austria, to disable her from opposing her designs on Turkey. The negotiation between Russia and France was carried on with uncommon activity at Berlin by Lucien Bonaparte. Russia has, however, since opened her eyes. In the settlement of the internal affairs of Germany, the only personage, among the continental powers or among the parties immediately concerned, who took umbrage, and acted up to the dignity of his station, was the king of Sweden. If his spirited memorial, addressed to the general diet in 1804, exposing the absurdity and the danger of allowing foreign interference to pronounce judgment on domestic disputes, which ought always to be settled in conformity to the laws and the tribunals of the country, had been supported by the other co-estates of the empire, the arrogance of France would have been checked at once, and the Germanic constitution have been saved from that blow which has in a manner terminated its existence. His efforts have however been as glorious to himself as reproachful to others. His solitary exertions to preserve what little remained of an antient code, have reflected a never-fading lustre on his name, and those who pusillanimously refused to listen to his exhortations, have shamefully compromised their dignity, and deserted their duty.

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and fertility of her hereditary dominions, she still possesses that weight which must ever command a preponderating influence in the affairs of Germany. The natural and artificial strength of the country; the number, discipline, and gallantry of the troops; the riches, variety, and fruitfulness of the soil; the industry and sobriety of the inhabitants; and, above all, their attachment to their rulers: all combine to uphold this truly imperial house. If it make a proper and politic use of the means with which Providence has entrusted it, it may still triumph over the new dynasty. If it fall, it must conspire against its own existence; or, if not a principal, must at least be an accessary to the crime. Most active and strenuous ought it therefore to be in curbing the power of France, which can only be done effectually, by a restoration of the federal union of Europe.

The policy which Prussia is bound to pursue is fully as evident; and although she has, for many years past, been estranged from her true interests, it is natural to suppose, as the designs and dispositions of France become more palpable, that she will at last adopt that line of conduct which can alone impart efficacy to her strength, or stability to her independence. Prussia has, hitherto, fallen into a most fatal mistake; and to her blind and narrow views are to be attributed most of the disasters

asters which, for the last fifteen years, have afflicted and desolated Europe. Had she been faithful to her alliances, the arrogance of France would have been long since chastised, and her power repressed: and Europe, instead of being at the outset of another war, might have been promoting the happiness of her inhabitants in the bosom of tranquillity. The line of conduct which it behoved Prussia to persist in, at the breaking out of the French revolution, had she consulted her dignity, her welfare, or her fame, never, in my mind, admitted of a question. It was, I thought, most distinctly defined. But whatever doubts the circumstances of those times might have occasioned, they must be totally dissipated now.

Prussia, at the commencement of the last century, compared with her present greatness, was a puny state. Her aggrandisement was the work of one man. The splendid talents of Frederic the IId. raised her, in one reign, from a secondary to a first rate-power. The safety of Germany and the peace of Europe seemed to require the change. An equipoise was created in the north of the empire, capable of curbing the superiority of Austria in the south. In another point of view, Prussia formed a kind of balance between Austria, Russia, and France, and, according to the designs of either

ther of these kingdoms, could throw the weight of her power and influence into the opposite scale.

The great Frederic, after rescuing his hereditary dominions from destruction, strengthened them by valuable acquisitions. He proved the extent and versatility of his genius both as a soldier and a statesman, not only by the defeat of a most powerful combination, but by a formal and final annexation of conquered territory. The fortune of war was succeeded by a long peace, during which his philosophic mind was unremittingly occupied in developing the character, and calling forth the resources, of his newly acquired states. At the close of his illustrious reign, his kingdom was in full possession of all the glory, respect, and strength, which arose out of the variety, magnitude, and triumphant issue of his splendid achievements. These advantages went on improving till the epoch of the French revolution, at which time the grandeur of Prussia seemed to be consummated, and every state was looking up to her as the arbiter of Europe.*

* The prudent policy, which was adhered to by Frederic, was abandoned at his death. His successor tracted out for himself what he conceived to be a more luminous career, which has been persevered in by the present king with a blindness and obstinacy that may terminate in his destruction. Prussia, in consequence

Few countries have been placed in so favourable a position for perpetuating their own glory, and conferring lasting benefits on the human race, as was at the command of Prussia when that unfortunate rebellion first broke out. It recurred over and over again, in the course of the succeeding war; and why she neglected to avail herself of her high fortune will ever set at defiance the most natural conclusions of reason. She might have regained, what she formerly so ardently coveted, a decisive ascendency in Holland, and, possibly, at some future period, might have been able to transplant her commercial genius from the banks of the Vistula and the shores of the Baltic, to a more safe, a more profitable, and a less confined sphere. She might not only have redeemed Holland, without risk, from the hands of the French; but, by giving a decisive check in other parts to the republican arms, she might have put an effectual end to that growing vigour at which she must at this moment secretly tremble.

consequence of her predatory system, is now completely surrounded by the three most powerful continental states, France, Austria, and Russia, against neither of which she could make a solitary defence. Should these three powers, at some future period, revive that plan, which she, in conjunction with two of them, some years back adopted towards Poland, her name and empire might, with equal facility, be obliterated.

It

It is true, that she has remained at peace and has added to her dominions and her treasure. As a reward for her base compliance, she has, through the interference of France, acquired a temporary grandeur. She has obtained a nominal sovereignty over countries of considerable extent, population, fertility, and revenue. She has, in exchange for a few paltry acres on the left bank of the Rhine, been invested with territories which give an apparent weight and consideration to her kingdom; and she may now contemplate her rule extending over the greatest part of the north of Germany. But has she, by this increase of empire, added to her political strength? Is her independence placed within those strong intrenchments which formerly secured it? Does she not now exist more by sufferance than from any inherent principle of vigour or means of resistance? Are those soldiers, whom she has been obliged to support, so able, or so willing, to contend against the pretensions of France as they were ten years back; and cannot those very dominions which France has procured for her, if unassisted by other powers, be wrested from her, with the same facility, by France?

The strength of a country does not always increase with extension of territory. When it is unequal to the defence of its own independence,

it signifies little what it possesses. Prussia, a few years ago, might have commanded her own terms. She is now, in a great degree, at the mercy of France. France may have been instrumental in procuring her nominal advantages, but has been sapping the foundations of her real grandeur. With so many cogent motives of active interference which have presented themselves to Prussia for many years back, one is at a loss to account for her total inaction. It is an aberration from sound policy for which we in vain endeavour to find even a plausible excuse. We can only, I fear, attribute it to a sordid love of money, a ruinous lust of empire, a narrow jealousy of a once rival state, or an inglorious desire of repose: or else to an unworthy ambition of acquiring territory of which the legal possessors have been scandalously despoiled, and which she has only obtained by condescending to be the abject instrument of a government which she must abhor. The Prussians have, however, been justly disappointed in their views, and they must now be convinced that they have been contributing to the elevation of a most formidable neighbour, whose design is eventually to sacrifice them with the rest of Europe. The republican rage has, in the mean time, been brought to a close; but its power remains; and,

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by being concentrated in one man, is proportionably to be dreaded. France is now where it was the ambition of Louis the XIVth to place her. She has broken down all the old fences which confined her, and is grasping, with some hope of success, at universal empire.*

What has happened in France, respecting the late alterations in her government, might have been easily foreseen. It has been the natural termination of her popular excesses. The French, in the very outset of their revolution, demonstrated the absolute necessity of restraint. They proved that they had not attained to that degree of civilization which is compatible with the enjoyment of liberty, and which renders men capable of living under a free constitution. The advantages of the people were soon dismissed from the thoughts of the ruling departments of the state, and a contest for superiority among factions was all that remained. In this fluctuation of affairs, it was very apparent that struggles would be endless, till some one arose, whose genius, whose fortune, or whose power, was sufficient to silence the claims, and suppress the exertions, of his competi-

* Prussia, after all, can never suffer Holland to be definitively annexed to France. It is the chief protection of the north of Germany.

tors. This change could be nothing less than the re-establishment of irresistible despotism. It was also very evident that France, in her revolutionary career, and cut off as she was from all those regular supplies which, under the old constitution, poured in from the flourishing condition of her manufactures, and of her foreign and colonial trade, could not maintain her numerous armies, and provide for the enormous exigencies of her government, but by forced loans and ruinous imposts at home, and the plunder of contiguous states. In this manner has she been proceeding for the last fifteen years, and as one country has been exhausted, another has become her prey. Friend or foe has been treated with the same inexorable rigour. Where the power of exaction has existed, there also has been the inclination; and no spot, which has allured by its abundance or its weakness, has been spared by the claims of justice or the petitions of humility.

These systematic and unprovoked acts of aggression would have been sufficient, one should have imagined, in their infancy, to have awakened the fears of independent states, and insured the determination of vigorous resistance. But, no! It was thought more prudent to submit without contention, than to incur the risk of being compelled to submit after contention. When great efforts

efforts are requisite, we are apt to postpone them, till their utility is lost, and to leave present circumstances to the operation of chance. Thus did this unmanly and sluggish feeling prevail; and so far from having disarmed any faculties of destruction, they have added to those which previously existed, the humiliation of contempt.

France has all along betrayed her intermediate intentions, and her ultimate designs. She now acts even a less mysterious part, and, from a greater sense of security, proclaims to the world the full scope of her ambition. This may be still resisted; but, if deferred much longer, resistance may be vain. The military strength of France continues to increase, and seems to identify itself, more and more every day, with her political existence. Her naval and commercial consequence being lost, the application of her means is directed to that one point. But that a power may be more easily repelled when weak and disjointed, than when firm and consolidated, requires no ingenuity of reasoning to prove; and why Prussia did not rather take advantage of her decisive superiority at a former period, than wait till the moment when the efficacy of her interference is rendered problematical, is one of those occurrences in politics which eludes every rational conjecture. If the king of Prussia had not, in the first instance,

withdrawn

withdrawn from his alliance against France; or had he, in the year 1799, assisted our troops with twenty thousand men in Holland; or if, at a subsequent period, he had added his weight in Italy to that of Austria and Russia, what innumerable evils might have been averted! That horrible revolution, which no man of feeling can contemplate without execration, might, at any one of these junctures, have been crushed; and those countries which have been since overwhelmed with every kind and degree of misery, might have been spared. What is still, perhaps, of greater consequence, the example of successful usurpation and wickedness which has been held up to the world, would never have existed, and mankind would have continued to advance in every branch of knowlege but that of crimes. Europe would also have escaped her present painful situation, and not have been shuddering from a dread of the failure of those means on which, at present, her very salvation hinges. The overbearing insolence and rapacity of Bonaparte do, however, apparently begin to operate on the fears of the leading powers, and the palpable conviction of increasing danger prevailing over less urgent considerations, their enmities may at length yield to more imperious motives.

The arrest of Sir George Rumbold, an accredited

dited minister, clothed with the sacred rights and privileges of his character, residing in a foreign state, and under the protection of a foreign court, is an event which, from its immediate construction, and consequent application, has startled the whole civilized world. It is one of those transactions by which every independent state must feel itself injured, and in which every independent state must be equally concerned. It is, in every point of view, one of the most atrocious and impudent acts that was ever avowedly committed by a government, and, aiming as it does at the very foundation of the public law of Europe, unless full reparation be required, and obtained, no peaceable intercourse between states can be, with safety, in future carried on. If the person of an Ambassador be no longer held inviolable; if he be liable to seizure and imprisonment, not only from the state where he is resident, but from the forcible interference of neighbouring powers; one hardly knows how any amicable communication between governments can exist, or, when differences arise, how harmony can be restored. That part of the public law of Europe which relates to diplomatic proceedings, and which has so materially conduced to moderate the passions, diminish the enmities, and assimilate the interests of nations, would

would instantly terminate. War, which could scarcely ever be obviated, would be conducted with implacable ferocity. There would be an end of all truce. No treaty could interpose. The sword would be the only tribunal to appeal to, and the triumph of the conqueror would be the extermination of his opponents. Ancient history furnishes a few precedents of such transactions; but in the records of modern times, no such example is to be found.*

In the consideration of this very important question, we must particularly advert to the object which France has evidently in view. We shall then be enabled to estimate more correctly the dangerous consequences to which the admission of her domineering principles would lead,

* I recollect one instance, which is peculiarly in point. When the Lacedæmonians, in the second year of the Peloponnesian war, sent an embassy to the King of Persia, the Ambassador, whilst in neutral territory, was seized by a party of Athenians sent for the express purpose, conveyed to Athens, and put to death. The Athenians, however, alledged in defence of such barbarous proceedings, that the Lacedæmonians had, the year before, forcibly seized and murdered some of their merchants. Bonaparte seems to have been guided by a similar pretended spirit of retaliation, though even without the same grounds to support him. At some future period, he may give a stronger authority to the precedent, by fulfilling the latter part of it.

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and the confusion, mischief, and degradation, which would inevitably ensue. France, not satisfied with the violence of her course, with the contempt and defiance with which she has violated her engagements, and trampled on all the ancient and venerable usages of the christian community, affects at length to feel herself strong enough to establish her *right* to pursue this destructive career, and to extort from the remaining kingdoms of Europe their formal acknowledgment of this assumed superiority. She has, in consequence, impudently intimated to the world her intention of erecting, by her own high command, a supreme tribunal, to which she will require every potentate implicitly to bow. The principles and regulations of this paramount court, which go to the utter explosion of all the tried maxims of civilized life, are to be made the future rule of nations, in their mode of conducting all transactions, throughout the whole range and variety of political combinations. There is to be no guide but its fancy, no authority but its power, no limits but its will. The first shock to the feelings of mankind has not only been already given, but the novelty is wearing off by repetition. France is every day familiarising the world with her propensities; and from those dispositions which have been betrayed, even in the present frowardness

of her infancy, we can easily anticipate the expectations of maturer years. She has, amidst her other innumerable encroachments, arrogated to herself the right, not only of dissolving the ancient code of public law, but of instituting a new one, which corresponds with her profligate sense of self-interest, and her views of exclusive arbitration. Without consulting with other powers, she excommunicates ambassadors, and puts them under the ban of her displeasure. She places them without the pale of public protection, annuls their privileges, attacks their character by the publication of the most infamous libels, and, when these measures are not deemed sufficiently vindictive, the laws of the states in which they are resident are violated, and their persons are carried off. If the sovereigns themselves have given offence, no regular remonstrance is preferred, no explanation demanded, no enquiry instituted, no satisfaction or apology required through the medium of accredited agents; but accusations and threats are vomited forth in the official journals of France, from which all forms, and all decency, and all truth, are equally dismissed. Extravagant charges are brought forward unsupported by fact, furious menaces are uttered, and insidious appeals are addressed to the passions of a people, in order to weaken their affection

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and allegiance to their legitimate prince.* This is a line of proceeding which may be perfectly consonant to the brutal vulgarity, the infuriated malice, and the arrogant pretensions of the French government; but is it a mode of conduct which can be tolerated with safety by any other power? France may influence, as she chuses, the public opinions of her own subjects, but if she be suffered to be the arbiter of all public opinion; to scatter, as she pleases, throughout every European state, the pestiferous seeds of her polluted doctrines; to excite to insurrection and rebellion; to issue her periodical lampoons and manifestoes against crowned heads; to declaim without argument; to assert without proof; there is an end of all independence. When silence is observed on such occasions, it argues a degree of fear and political abasement which is little short of the most abject submission. France is then

* In addition to the arrest of Sir George Rumbold, I allude to the infamous libel published in the Moniteur against the king of Sweden; the scandalous histories which were trumped up relative to Mr. Drake, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Spencer Smith, many of which the French government obliged the courts, at which these gentlemen were resident, to insert in their official gazettes; the detention and plunder of Wagstaff, the messenger; and the libel against England, inserted at the instance of Lasnes in the Lisbon gazette, and repelled in so able and spirited a manner by Lord Robert Fitzgerald.

the despot, and those who endure her conduct are her trembling slaves.

The king of Prussia, under whose protection Sir George Rumbold, as minister to the circle of Lower Saxony, was placed, has indeed felt his dignity offended by this glaring infraction of diplomatic rights, and has, in some measure, resented the affront. He dispatched a spirited memorial to the cabinet of St. Cloud, which, as far as personal liberation was concerned, produced the desired effect. But as far as concerns the public right of nations, or the ceremonial of courts, no apology appears to have been offered, nor has any atonement been made. The person of Sir George Rumbold was released, and his papers returned; but not till after his person had been seized in the dead of night in a neutral state, transported thence to Paris, and confined, for several days, in prison; and not till after his papers had been forcibly taken from his possession, broken open, ransacked, and read.—Even then, it is said, that he was only liberated on certain conditions; and that, before the officer restored him to liberty, a solemn promise was exacted, expressly binding him down never again to revisit Hamburgh, or to come within one hundred leagues of the French territory, in a public capacity. I must, however, hope, that no such

such degrading stipulations were acceded to. One unlawful act can never authorise another; nor can I conceive that any British minister, feeling himself clothed with those sacred rights which appertain to his character, can have so far departed from a just conception of his real dignity as to have subscribed to such terms. This affair is, however, not yet settled, and may still lead to most important consequences.

The remaining states of Germany, more especially those which are contiguous to France, if we unite them in one mass, can scarcely any longer pretend to power or respect. So disorganised, and so trampled upon, have they been, that their very names are nearly sunk in oblivion, and unless backed by the only two remaining independent members of the empire, they cannot be expected to form, in any sense, a point of resistance. Even Saxony, Bavaria, and the Palatinate, whose former history has been marked by many a splendid achievement, have no longer the courage or the ability to contend. Those who, by being nearer, are more within the grasp of France, are still more humiliated. How have they been mulcted and terrified! how have their once proud princes been insulted and disgraced! and by whom? By Bonaparte—one who, but a few years back, would have disfigured the levee of the pettiest of their tribe. But they are now become the puppets

But what have they profited by all this officious compliance—by this meekness and humility of spirit—by these timorous gestures—by this base prostration of all nobility of sentiment? What have they gained from his haughty, encroaching, and destructive spirit, but superadded claims and insults? Nothing has, indeed, more fatally contributed to sink Europe in the estimation of mankind, to efface her real dignity, and to unnerve her real strength, than the abject facility with which she has been accustomed to yield to the arrogant pretensions of France; nor has any thing tended more to embolden the views, and to confirm the success of Bonaparte. Had the ebullitions of his pride, the paroxysms of his anger, the irritability and caprice of his temper, his contempt of public law, his invasions and spoliations in neutral territories, his threats, his usurpations, his ordinances, his arrests, his robberies, and his assassinations, been firmly opposed in the outset; had the sovereigns of Europe even made an attempt to maintain the dignity, the honour, or the independence of their crowns, against the numberless aggressions and insults of this usurper; could he, I will ask, have reached, or would he even have aspired at, the altitude from which he now looks down? It is therefore the base timidity of the legitimate sovereigns of

Europe

Europe which has, in an indirect, but in a most efficacious manner, contributed to *his* elevation. They have removed those obstructions, those apparently insurmountable obstructions, which were interposed by the obscurity of his birth, and the turpitude of his character, between him and his present fortune. They have, more than the people of France, placed the crown on his head, and the sceptre in hand.

In proceeding to the north of Europe, we there perceive a much more flattering prospect of vigorous opposition. Hope seems to rise with uncloudded rays in that horizon, and that country whose barbarous hordes once poured destruction on the polished but effeminate south, seems now likely to make full reparation for the dreadful calamities which it formerly inflicted. To that quarter we must now chiefly direct our views for the first grand effort of resistance which may check the profligate career of Bonaparte, and eventually disengage the continent from his annihilating grasp.

The rapid progress of this vast empire towards improvement is one of the surprising events of modern times. Its population, its riches, and its revenue, still bear no proportion to its extent; but when we contemplate it at the accession of Peter

the First and as it now displays itself, we have ample room for astonishment.

Two enterprising reigns, that of Peter I. who may be considered as the founder, and that of Catherine II. who may be considered as the confirmer, of its European grandeur, were able to produce these mighty effects; and less than another century may raise it above every other state in Christendom. Distantly removed as it at present is from France, it is apparently less interested than Austria or Prussia in the fortunes of that empire; but, extending our views to future times, we may easily imagine them in contact.

The sudden dereliction of the late emperor of Russia from the confederacy which had been wisely formed to arrest the encroachments of France, may, in some measure, be ascribed to the natural impetuosity of his character. It can also be accounted for on principles which are not much at variance with the common feelings and prudential maxims of mankind. He engaged in the league with full sincerity, and with a sincerity founded on the strongest impulse, a thorough conviction of the danger which menaced every state, from the profligate principles of the French cabinet. These principles, which he regarded with abhorrence, he was firmly satisfied it was the

the interest of every well-ordered government to controul, as, in proportion to their ascendency, was its own security weakened. He, therefore, on becoming a party to the alliance, sent a powerful aid, under the command of a successful general, to co-operate with the Austrian army. The good fortune which attended their joint exertions, and the rapid expulsion of the French from Italy, are still fresh in our recollection. The Russians, who with dauntless hearts marched up to the cannon's mouth, soon struck their adversaries with dismay. Where they attacked, they stormed; and the decision and rapidity of their evolutions convinced their opponents that they had a desperate enemy to contend with. Unacquainted with their mode of fighting, it made an immediate impression. Alarm spread to such a degree through the republican ranks, that, after a few encounters, it was with difficulty that they could be brought to face these fierce antagonists. The impetuosity of the Russians was tempered by the more deliberate movements of the Austrians, and the outset seemed to augur the most flattering conclusion. The confederate armies were, in every instance, triumphant; and in a few weeks they drove their opponents from the banks of the Adige to the frontiers of Savoy. This success might have continued, had not the

selfish policy of Austria disappointed the hopes of Europe, and occasioned a breach with her new ally.

The Austrian commanders, desirous of husbanding their troops, which had been thinned by the struggles of six or seven campaigns, contrived that the Russians should be placed at the most dangerous posts, and, on all occasions, be exposed to the brunt of the enemy's attack. This circumstance alone would not, perhaps, have been a source of dissension, as, in these cases, honour, especially in romantic minds, more than counterbalances loss. But the rewards which were thus valiantly and dearly purchased, were entirely appropriated to those who had been least active in their acquisition. Every station, as it fell, was taken possession of in the name of the emperor of Germany. Not a word was said of Paul, so that his troops were treated as mere mercenaries, bound to shed their blood, but neither to participate in the profit nor the glory of their exertions. A jealousy was thus created between the commanders of the two armies, and, towards the close of their brilliant campaign in Italy, the Russians were ordered, under the command of their victorious chief, to march to the defence of Switzerland. Suwarrow instantly obeyed, but he soon found himself

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in a situation which he could not with glory maintain. Unprovided with every necessary appointment, destitute of those arrangements which are so essential to the success of an army in a strange country, he shortly discovered that he must eventually be involved in inextricable difficulties. He naturally suspected that he was sent there to pursue a hopeless contest, whilst his companions in arms were perishing in useless toils, and the laurel was withering on his own brow. The representation of these wrongs to his imperial master produced an effect which might have been easily foreseen on his irritable temper. He became furious; and, without seeking for explanation or redress; without even considering the ruinous consequences which his hasty decision portended to the cause in which he had embarked, he ordered his forces to return immediately home, and left the Austrians to fight their own battle.

This sudden and unlooked-for defection was a signal to the French for renovated exertions. The enemy whom they most dreaded had quitted the field, and those troops, with whom they had repeatedly fought with success, presented a solitary opposition. They rallied every where; fresh levies were poured in, in every direction; and, in a few weeks, their losses were recovered.

Paul must have contemplated with pride a reverse which so clearly demonstrated the extent of his power, the valour of his soldiers, and the utility of his assistance. Had his resentment stopted there, it might have been excusable. But he pushed it beyond all limits either of justice or judgment. He not only seceded from the league, but former friendship being suddenly converted into the most deadly hate, he was precipitated into those measures which were best calculated to express it. The force which had been granted to the aid, was now devoted to the injury, of the anti-revolutionary cause. He entered into a strict treaty of alliance with France, the prejudicial effects of which were only prevented by his premature death. His fortunate demise, and the glorious battle of Copenhagen, brought to a speedy dissolution the formidable northern confederacy; formidable, as it affected the liberties of the continent; but, as I, in a former pamphlet* attempted to explain, and as subsequent events have fully proved, as far as they applied to Great Britain, by no means assuming a terrific aspect. The brilliant successes of this country, added to the general lassitude and apathy of Europe, led to the peace of 1802.

* A View of the Political Situation of the Northern Powers, published in 1801.

That peace, which was not only degrading in its terms, but impolitic in its views, was fortunately of short duration. It has, indeed, been attended with one useful consequence, which, however, was neither foreseen, nor aimed at by its authors. It has opened the eyes of Europe, in some degree, and of this country completely, with regard to the systematic ambition of France. It has proved, in the most indisputable way, that the object of France is universal domination; and that her efforts, whether of open violence or insidious design, towards the accomplishment of that aim, are only to be counteracted by force. Of what utility are the vigilance and address of cabinets, when no written instrument is considered as binding; when promises are made only to be broken, and treaties signed only to be violated, as occasion may require, or interest suggest! With such principles and views, a system of plunder and despotism can be more securely and successfully prosecuted in peace than in war. Intrigues are conducted without interruption; attack is applied without opposition; and, when the object is effected, we are left to wonder at our credulity.

The short truce, for it can hardly be denominated a peace, which was agreed on by England and France, not only unfolded the designs of Bonaparte,

naparte, but his mode of execution. The continental powers, although they have not yet declared themselves, have, no doubt, as well as England, been watchful of events. Russia, above all, has carefully treasured up in her recollection the occurrences of the last three years; and, no longer under the dominion of a capricious despot, but of a mild and wise sovereign, her means will, in all probability, be as vigorously displayed as her measures have been consistently adopted. To Russia, therefore, Europe, may principally look up, as the prime mover of that spirit of reaction which may yet redeem her from destruction, and which may point out the path of glory to the still more potent resources of Austria and Prussia.

Russia, as a continental power, is a most formidable foe; and if not of such importance as Austria or Prussia, in an attack on France, it is only on account of the distance of her separation. Her troops are equally numerous, and equally valiant, and in some respects, may even claim a superiority. They are entirely devoted to their officers, and possess both the active and passive virtues of the soldier. They can patiently wait in inaction; bnt the instant they receive their orders, nothing but death can check their ardour. The interval between the command and the execution is scarcely perceptible.

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The vigour and hardiness of their constitution give them another decided advantage over the inhabitants of more southern climes. The education which they receive promotes these qualities, and enables them to encounter, without inconvenience, the most sudden transitions of climate. A Russian can not only exist, but retain possession of all his energies, while he is pursuing a mode of life which would destroy a less masculine race. He endures, without murmur, every privation and every fatigue. Inured from his infancy to every kind of hardship; bred up in notions of implicit submission to his superiors; accustomed to support labour, hunger, and cold, in his ordinary avocations; he never finds himself out of his sphere, nor does he ever repine at those vicissitudes to which the military profession is so peculiarly exposed.

Russia is, on many accounts, the natural ally of Britain. Separated as we are, by an almost immeasurable distance, we are connected by many reciprocal ties, and our interests in no shape clash. The commercial intercourse which subsists between the two countries is highly beneficial to both. The revenue of Russia is, indeed, principally derived from its vast concerns with Great Britain, which is the chief mart that consumes her immense exportations, and spreads in-

dustry and wealth through the remotest regions of her empire.

It is a great mistake to imagine that, because our manufacturers help to pay for the raw materials of Russia, the exchange is detrimental to the productive labour of that country. The fact is, Russia is not yet in a state to have many manufactures of her own; and, whilst this incapacity continues, it is much better that her wants should be supplied from a foreign market. In this manner, she obtains them at the least possible expence, and foreign industry allows domestic labour to pursue a more advantageous course. Agriculture must precede manufacture: and whilst the capital of Britain enables the Russian farmer to cultivate his land, the articles of utility and taste, for which his produce are exchanged, gradually beget the desire of imitation, and expand his mind to higher attainments. France may boast of the importance of her trade with Russia; but when it is made known that the raw materials purchased by England, amount annually to near 5,000,000*l.* sterling, and that those taken off by France, in the days of her greatest commercial prosperity, never exceeded from 4 to 600,000*l.*, which, since the revolution, have dwindled to between 2 and 300,000*l.*, the substance of that importance completely vanishes.

Sweden,

Sweden, the northern neighbour of Russia, will apparently become an immediate party to the alliance. She may, in fact, be considered as actually embarked, and already at war with France. The martial disposition of her inhabitants will render her a powerful auxiliary. The young Prince, who sways the sceptre of that ancient kingdom, has shewn himself worthy of his illustrious descent. He has shewn that he possesses virtues which ennoble the proudest blood, and adorn the loftiest station. The same gallant spirit which animated the breasts of his ancestors has been transmitted, without diminution, to himself: a legacy more valuable than the crown which he inherits. Gustavus Adolpus, in his time, stood forth the champion of Europe, and was a principal instrument in dissolving a league which threatened her destruction. Gustavus IV. treading in his luminous footsteps, may also be an instrument, destined at a more awful crisis to save her from a more melancholy fate. Inexperienced as he is, and incompetent as his means, when measured with the resources of France, visibly are, he at least has had the merit of first declaring his sentiments, of first throwing down the gauntlet of defiance, of first setting the brilliant example. However he may have erred as a politician, which remains to be proved, he has

felt and acted with the honour of a soldier, and the dignity of a king. Conscious of his royal descent, and of the glory of being the legitimate governor of a warlike people, he received into his dominions, with every regal honour, the rightful owner of the French throne, and has disdainfully refused to brook the insults of an usurper. How superior, in the sound estimation of mankind, must such a Prince be ever held to the mean object of French idolatry. The one risks an empire by virtues which alone are worthy of preserving it: the other has acquired an empire by vices by which it should be lost. But whatever may be the destiny of this brave and patriotic monarch, the fame of worthy deeds will triumph in the gratitude of posterity, and whilst the memory of his name shall be attended with blessing, that of his adversary will be loaded with execration.

His dominions will, probably, be among the first objects of attack, but he has one advantage which Bonaparte can never again possess, the spirit of his people in his favour: nor do I at all despair, groundless as the hope may appear to some, that the legions of France will be repulsed by the energies of the Swedes.

In our estimate of the strength of this kingdom in a continental war, we must recollect what it has

has formerly achieved. Gustavus Vasa liberated his country from the Danish yoke. Gustavus Adolphus, the greatest captain of his age, saved the liberties of Germany, and gave stability to the protestant faith. Charles the XIIth was, for a long time, the terror of Europe; and the late King made the powerful Catherine tremble in her capital. Gustavus III. however intemperate in his zeal, rescued his country from Russian subjection, and, by the revolution of 1772, laid the foundation of a more prosperous era. Like Joseph the IId, he was too precipitate in his reforms: but his dominions are at this moment deriving advantages from many regulations which were the production of his active mind. Should Sweden be successful in the approaching struggle, France would shrink from her pretensions faster than she has formed them. The absurd notion which prevails of the superiority of French troops would instantly vanish, and Europe would again assert her real consequence.

Denmark, whatever her wishes might be, would be speedily forced into the alliance. Considering, indeed, the wrongs and insults which she has experienced, there is every reasonable ground to think that she would join it with alacrity. The Danes, although they have improved in internal regulation and domestic economy, no longer

longer possess the vigour which formerly distinguished them. A selfish spirit of interest and love of trade have vitiated many of their noblest feelings. In point of lucre they have been the most successful of all the northern states. By the continental wars which have arisen out of the French revolution, they have been considerable gainers. They have shared part of the fragments of the French commerce; and a great portion of the carrying trade, which was formerly so profitable to Holland, has fallen into their hands. Thus, if their arms are less to be dreaded, their treasury is better filled. Against the French the Norwegians would still more readily engage, and much might be expected from the courage and zeal of that gallant people. It must, indeed, be an object of high importance to the crown of Denmark to reduce the power of France, which is become a most troublesome and dangerous neighbour.

Turkey, whose councils are necessarily influenced by those of St. Petersburgh, would also administer a powerful aid. The Mahometan troops, contending alone against those of Christendom, have little prospect of success; but instructed by the skill, and encouraged by the example of Europeans, they are a formidable force. The campaign of 1801 in Egypt furnished many illustrations

lustrations of the justness of this remark. The French, however, with their usual presumption, still pretend to a preponderance of influence at the Porte, but facts contradict the assertion. It is not, indeed, likely that France should at present retain at Constantinople an ascendency over Russia. Distantly removed as Turkey is from the former, and dependent as she is on the latter, the strong feelings of interest naturally point out to her that alliance which is so immediately interwoven with her safety. The French, confined as they now are from remote expeditions, are not likely to endanger the security of the Turkish empire: whereas Russia is at her very doors, and, as well from positive strength, as from the inclination of the Greeks, and the powerful faction which is devoted to her in the very heart of the Sultan's dominions, could shake his throne to its foundations. In addition to the strong prudential motives which will thus naturally determine the Turks to follow the councils of Russia, we may reasonably expect that the circumstance of those councils being now favourable to Great Britain, will also operate as a powerful incentive to their zeal. During the late war, we rendered them most essential services. They well recollect, that it was entirely the consequence of our exertions that Ægypt was recovered from the French,

French, and the integrity of their empire afterwards preserved.* The mischief of French intrigue is therefore likely to terminate speedily at the Porte, and unless Le Brun make a precipitate retreat, he may very possibly, ere long, find himself a prisoner in the Seven Towers.

The king of Naples, weakened and degraded as he has been, must be nevertheless anxious to contribute every thing in his power that may conduce to extricate him from his present embarrassing situation, to restore him to the eclipsed splendour of his rank, and to reinstate him in his territories, over which he has long held a mere nominal reign.

Nor will Portugal be backward, the moment she is encouraged by the faintest glimmer of success. How exultingly will she burst asunder those chains which she has worn with indignation, and how joyfully will those taunts and insults which she has been compelled to tolerate

* If the favourable dispositions which the Porte must have felt towards us, after the expulsion of the French from Ægypt, had been properly managed, those exclusive privileges which were formerly granted to the French, and which they from their aggressions ought now to forfeit, might, one should think, have been easily secured to us. It would be a great object if we could obtain an establishment in the Black Sea, which might be rendered the empotium of a most lucrative commerce.

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from the brutal Lasnes, be retaliated on the head of his Corsican master! The Portuguese abhor both the Spaniards and the French; the former from the memory of past domination, the latter from the feelings of present suffering. They are in the same degree attached to us. They have not forgotten the generous supplies which were voted by the British Parliament after the dreadful earthquake of Lisbon in 1755, nor the succours in arms, ammunition, provision, and men, which we sent in 1762, and which saved them from a second Spanish subjugation. The independence of their country is still dear to their hearts; and if once the councils of their court could be invigorated, and they could be brought to place a proper dependence on their own strength, their efforts might not be unsuccessful. Portugal has, for the last fifty years, been chiefly supported by her connexion with Great Britain, her oldest and most useful ally. The trade which she carries on with us is of the most beneficial kind. We purchase almost the entire produce of her soil, which, if overrun by French troops, it will be the cruel policy of France to destroy, that we may be obliged to have recourse to her market for our wines.

Even Spain, though at present compelled to dissemble, if a fair opportunity presented itself,

would, in all probability, start up from her trance, and, vindicating her wrongs, would assail that cause which she is now reluctantly doomed to assist. The Spaniards are a gallant, generous, and high-minded nation; and however the court, which has long been at the mercy of a venal and abandoned faction, may be subdued, the spirit of the people still lives in the recollection of past achievements.

Let us now take a view of those unhappy countries which have been either formally or virtually annexed to the territory of France, and over which she holds an absolute and undisguised sway. Let us endeavour to ascertain what their real sentiments and wishes must inevitably be, respecting the pretended advantages which they have gained by a change of masters.

Savoy, which, through a succession of ages, flourished under its native princes, has been destined, for the last ten years, to groan under the burden of French servitude. The glory and benefits of an independent rank are lost; the splendour and expence of a court removed; whilst her sovereign, an exile from the productive part of his hereditary dominions, is confined to the sterile mountains of Sardinia, where he wanders about a fugitive, without consequence, and almost without support.

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This country, which held a respectable rank among the sovereign states of Europe, and the independence of which was of such importance, as the chief barrier of Italy, now forms a part of the French empire. It has not only been degraded from its station, but robbed of its wealth. It has been overburdened with taxes, and subjected to military conscriptions and contributions, which have beaten down every fence against oppression, and worn out every sinew of strength. Nothing has been left to the inhabitants which is either gratifying to pride, or beneficial to interest. Instead of a regular, lawful, and uncorrupt administration, a set of paupers and ruffians, in the character of French agents, have been advanced to authority, whose perpetual object is to amass riches by any means; and who, in the exercise of their functions, are instigated and supported by the government from which they are delegated. This indeed has been the uniform treatment which conquered states have experienced from the French. Their profligate policy has ever been, when once they have gained a secure footing, to put in practice every vexatious mode of proceeding, and to skreen themselves from the penalties of resistance by completely breaking the spirit of the people. In the application of these atrocious cruelties they have unfortunately been

too successful. By creating jealousies and enmities between parties, and placing them one against the other, they have acquired the mastery, which, when once obtained, has been exerted in acts of ruin. Genoa, Milan, and Tuscany, those once fertile and flourishing parts of Italy, the seat of commercial opulence, useful industry, and cultivated taste, and the nursery and repositary of the fine arts, have been treated with the same unqualified barbarity and scorn. Even the papal territories have not been spared, and to so abject a state of contempt is the Pope reduced, that he can only be considered as a machine, whose movements Bonaparte directs. The church has been made completely subservient to his views, and its ministers, throughout the extent of their dominion, pay implicit obedience to his commands. The overbearing insolence of this man is without precedent. When he assumes power, next to the possession of it, his object seems to be to mortify every generous feeling, by impressing a conviction of the insignificance of those over whom he tyrannises. His seizure of the presidency of the Italian states was one of the most insulting acts that was ever committed by any man who pretended to defer to the opinion of the people, and was a worthy prelude to those parts of the drama which have since been exhibited before the Parisian populace.

Brabant

Brabant is also groaning under the ponderous weight of the same ignominious thraldom, enraged at French treachery, and panting for deliverance. Disaffected as it was, and with some cause, to the house of Austria, that disaffection has been converted into love, by the iron rule of France. Its towns depopulated, its plains deserted, its commerce lost, its rights annulled, its people trampled on, agriculture and manufactures rapidly declining, its taxes more than quadrupled, this once flourishing country no longer exhibits a semblance of its pristine greatness. Bruxelles once the residence of a polite court, the resort of the learned and the rich, the centre of gaiety and the arts, is now placed under the sordid and despotic administration of a French governor, who feels neither pride in its happiness, nor interest in its prosperity, but who, uncertain how long his office may last, insults with contempt, and grinds with oppression. The streets are nearly abandoned, the principal houses are untenanted, the churches are dismantled. Many of those sacred structures which were dedicated to the service of God, are now converted into barracks, where a licentious soldiery hold their blasphemous orgies, and, whilst scoffing at the sanctity of the place, make a mockery of the miseries of the people.

Switzerland

Switzerland next presents itself, over whose ruins no feeling or virtuous mind can dwell, without emotions of the deepest indignation and regret. This sacred soil, which has produced so many heroes, which was the seat of frugality of manners, and unambitious happiness, and which, for centuries past, has been one of the chief nurseries of liberty, how has it been polluted and defaced! Since the great æra of its independence,* for which it so nobly fought, it was unmolested in the enjoyment of its rights. Like the ancient Olympia, which was respected by the whole of Greece, Switzerland was respected by the whole of Europe. It was regarded as a palladium which was entitled to the reverence of mankind. Surrounded as it was by powerful states, it was held inviolable by them all. With no ambition but that of remaining as it was, its virtues, and the memory of past deeds, were a sufficient safeguard. It was contemplated by the

* Twelve men, at whose head was the immortal William Tell, in 1308, liberated the cantons of Schweitz, Underwald, and Uri, from the Austrian yoke. The only revenge which they took on the Austrian governors was to conduct them to the frontiers, where they administered to them an oath that they would never again serve against the Helvetian nation. The other cantons soon joined the confederacy, and, after a long and desperate struggle against the whole power of Austria, they completely established their independence.

philosopher

philosopher and the statesman, as a sanctuary which enclosed the fairest virtues of our kind, which was the residence of religious toleration, moral rectitude, civil liberty, domestic happiness, innocent courage, and manly simplicity. Satisfied with its own possessions, and seldom, in its political capacity, intermeddling with the concerns of other states, it was an insulated spot, where all the purposes of good government were answered, and none of its distractions felt. Abundant without superfluity, affluent without luxury, strong without ambition, it excited neither cupidity nor alarm, and was equally disregarded by envy and fear. It was a country to which the traveller, sick of the pomp, the bustle, and the dissipation of other parts, could retire with satisfaction and safety; and, whilst residing among its uncorrupted inhabitants, could contemplate the majestic features of nature; and, in the midst of a vicious world, mingle with the unadulterated manners of a virtuous people.

But nothing has been held sacred by the French, nothing has interrupted the career of their profane attacks. Poverty and wealth, honour and infamy, virtue and vice, have been consigned to the same fate; even weakness has provoked hatred, and invited assault. Where little or no profit was to be derived, they have, in many instances, considered

dered happiness and innocence as a reproach to their own character, and, on that account solely, have doomed them to destruction.

Switzerland, however, presented other allurements. It was one of the barriers which defended the German empire, and was consequently an obstacle to French ambition. But strongly as it is fortified by nature, and valiantly as it might have been defended by a gallant race of men; had its population been once roused, it might have defied the utmost efforts of an assailant. The French were aware of this, and laid their plans accordingly. Their object, in the first instance, was not to beat down by violence, but to ensnare by stratagem. They brought all the delusions and machinations of base intrigue into action. By threats and promises, artfully managed; by creating alarm, and instilling suspicion, as the variation of circumstances suggested; they at length stirred up a spirit of dissension and animosity among the different cantons, and among different families in the same canton. The country was thus divided against itself; and, whilst each faction was eagerly engaged in the vehement prosecution of their own projects, their minds were called off from the contemplation of the only important point. The public good was lost sight of amidst the distraction of private passions; the disjointed strength

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of the confederate states was employed in quelling the quarrels of individuals; and insubordination and disunion were every where triumphant. Whilst these ruinous feuds were at their height, the French, who had all along been watching for the opportunity, and had been collecting troops on their frontiers under pretence of guarding against any popular tumult, stepped in, and enslaved them. The abhorrence and detestation of the Swiss against these intruders must, by this time, be nearly screwed up to a pitch of phrenzy, and woe to those of that nation who may be found among them when once their resentments burst forth into action. Dreadful will be the retribution of that day.

But the Swiss, though they may recover their independence, will never again be what they were. The spirit which asserts and preserves the rights of mankind is broken by oppression. French vices have also been engrafted on the simplicity of their natures, and the public stock of happiness has been for ever adulterated. That genuine love of our natal soil, that purity of public virtue, which are the only real safeguards of civil liberty, have been contaminated by the deleterious principles of factious demagogues and visionary legislators. The desire of revenge and emancipation may still beat high; but ample as

the sacrifice offered up to the one may, at some future period, be, the other will never be enjoyed with that reverence for the object, or relish for the possession, which formerly obtained.

And what must also be the sensations of Hanover, that much injured and enslaved country! Scarcely does the page of history, ample and variegated as it is, furnish an instance of such scandalous perfidy, and barbarous usage, as blacken this foul transaction. Torn from the protection of a beneficent sovereign, and delivered up to the avaricious cruelty of a destroying fiend, the transition was no less sudden than outrageous. If we were to narrate the anecdotes of this unhappy country, since it has been at the disposal of the French banditti; if the crimes of those infernal agents, who have been sent to prey upon its vitals, were to be faithfully detailed; what scenes of infamy, extortion, and brutality, would meet the eye! All the basest vices which human imagination can conceive, or human depravity can commit, instigated by all the revenge which the human heart can contain, have been perpetrated in this unoffending electorate. How the Hanoverians must now deplore their credulity! how they must thirst for an opportunity of wiping off the stain of disgrace, and retrieving their antient character!*

* In 1757 the Hanoverians were exposed in the same manner, though not in the same degree, to French tyranny and rapine.

how they must now lament, that they did not assemble on their frontiers to resist these profligate invaders, to repel them, or to perish in the attempt! How glorious is the contemplation of death when gained in our country's defence! with what charms surrounded, with what honour irradiated! The commendation of the wise, the esteem of the good, the approbation of our own hearts, the brilliancy of example, the discharge of duty, and the certainty of living in the recollection of an admiring and grateful posterity. How truly enviable above a life which is led in servility, and disgraceful bondage, the opprobrium or the pity of mankind, and an object of derision to the tyrant who issues his terrific decrees!

Last of all comes Holland to close this melancholy list; a country, which, if we regard its past fame and power, we are at a loss to conceive so fallen. What a different spectacle does she present, shaking off the yoke of her old tyrants in the

The French, after breaking the convention of Closter Seven, insisted that the Hanoverians should deliver up their arms. Roused by a sense of the indignity offered to the honour of a brave and warlike people, they resolved to rescue their country from the degrading oppression, and the following year under Ferdinand of Brunswick, they bravely made head against their conquerors, expelled them from the electorate, and forced them to repass the Rhine.

sixteenth century, and, in the eighteenth, bending her neck to a new tyranny an hundred times more intolerable. In the one instance, we find a high-minded and generous people, irritated by a sense of wrongful oppression, redeeming their legitimate rights, and laying the foundations of the security, the happiness, and the prosperity, of a great country: in the other, the total absence of all these public and patriotic virtues, sacrificing that country, with all its security, and happiness, and prosperity, at the shrine of depraved avarice, factious discord, and selfish ambition. In the one instance, some of the first statesmen and warriors of the age (an age fertile in eminent men) regulating, and wisely conducting, the energies of a whole people; in the other, a band of venal demagogues, repressing their feelings, and again delivering up the state to the power of a foreign and sanguinary usurpation. In former times Holland resisted the whole power of France; but the vigour of the people has wasted itself in the pursuits of opulence and ease. Since the treaty of Utrecht, she has visibly declined in political consequence: since her connexion with revolutionary France, she has been completely ruined.

With a great population, long habits of industry, an extensive commerce, a powerful and well-appointed navy, and some of the strongest fortresses

fortresses in Europe, garrisoned by well disciplined and well affected troops, one should naturally have imagined, that, in proportion as the means of defence were possessed, they would, in so honourable a cause, have been vigorously employed. Above all, the pride of independence, particularly of that independence which had been wrested by the daring hand of patriotism from the galling yoke of tyranny: which had been gained by a series of gallant exploits; and which had so completely proved the superiority of the efforts of freemen opposed to those of slaves. These recollections, one should have conceived, would have impressed them with a due sense of the value of their acquisitions, and would have inspired them with the fortitude that was necessary to shield them. But events have shewn that the Dutch thought, and felt otherwise. Corrupted by wealth, disunited by faction, discouraged by suspicion, and incensed against their domestic rulers, they deemed this the moment most fit for the exercise of private resentment, and sacrificed their country to their revenge. The French, taking advantage of these culpable and pusillanimous dispositions, insured to themselves an easy conquest. They poured in their troops on every side; the strongest fortresses were surrendered

surrendered the moment they were summoned; and these intruders, who were hailed as their deliverers, have since held over them an uninterrupted sway.

But the Dutch have been wofully disappointed; and, instead of receiving at their hands the benefits of a friend, have been treated with all the severity and contempt of a conquered foe. Since the year 1795 they have been little more than the inhabitants of a province of France. Their nominal independence has only served to render their virtual subjugation more galling. They have suffered all the disadvantages of French servitude, without receiving any of the benefits of French protection. They have been attacked at every point; and whilst we, as their declared enemies, were capturing their colonial possessions, the French, as their professed friends, by draining them of their domestic resources, were inflicting a more deadly blow. Nearly the whole capital of Holland has been paid into the treasury of France, and they seem at last to be reduced to a state of absolute destitution and despair.* They have indeed

* Van Hasselt, one of the members of the Batavian legislative body, in a speech delivered on the 1st January, before a secret meeting of that assembly, in consequence of an application from the Executive Directory for the *third* extraordinary contribution

indeed, in a great degree, merited their fate; and it is to be hoped, that their unexampled sufferings will act as a warning to other states, and cause them to hesitate before they resort to the desperate expedient of calling in a foreign force for the suppression of domestic broils.

Whilst contemplating the foregoing facts, it is quite out of the course of things to conceive that the torpor, which has for so great a length of time benumbed the nations of the continent, can last much longer. Their protracted winter must finally yield to the genial influence of nature. They must at length awaken from their profound sleep; and the energies of the soul, shaking off the

of one per cent. on *capital*,* to cover the expences of the year 1804, has circumstantially detailed the complete ruin of that country, occasioned by its connexion with France. He has exposed, in glaring colours, the scandalous abuses, and corrupt and arbitrary proceedings, of French administration. With what shame and regret must the Dutch look back to those glorious days, when her fleets were contending with those of Britain for superiority. They have, however, shewn their esteem for us, in the only way in which they have been able to shew it, by their generous behaviour to the British seamen who were lately wrecked on their coast.

* One per cent. on capital is equal to twenty per cent. on income, and this being the third *extraordinary* contribution in one year, amounts to a total of sixty per cent. It must be observed that these are only the *extraordinary* contributions—the *ordinary* ones are also going on in the same proportion.

lethargy

lethargy of the body, must operate their deliverance. They must at length be actuated by a conviction of danger, and a sense of duty. The feelings of honour, of courage, and resentment, cannot for ever remain in a passive state. They must be convinced that as long as their pusillanimity, by offering submission, invites attack, Bonaparte will continue to advance. They must have discovered that he is not of a temper to be soothed by humility, or pacified by concession. His ruling maxim is power; his leading principle is extermination. He proceeds in his operations with a rapidity of climax which has few examples. The more that is granted, the more will be required. Every motive therefore, whether of policy or expediency, of honour or glory, of interest or justice, or safety, imperiously points at resistance. Those sovereigns who persist in yielding are accessary to their own downfal. They are forgetful of the sacred duties of their station, and equally disregard the dignity of their thrones, the interest of their families, and the happiness of their people. The facility with which they deliver up their subjects to a foreign yoke, seems to discharge those that remain from the bond of allegiance, and to exhort them to insurrection in vindication of their own character, and in defence of their own rights. The powers of Europe are thus

thus most imperiously called upon to unite in one common cause, a cause which, although from past folly, and jealousy, and cowardly suspicion, is certainly become desperate, but which is not yet placed beyond the possibility of redemption. Can they then any longer deliberate on what course to pursue? Instead of wasting their time in useless lamentations over commited errors, let them at once concentrate their energies, and endeavour to repair past losses by present exertion. War may still lead to glory and security; peace can only expose them to more immediate and more serious dangers, unattended with that splendour which is derived from the efforts of courage, or that consolation which accompanies the discharge of duty.

With all these springs of hatred, and motives of resistance, in those states which are still free, as well as in those which are only nominally so, and those which have been formally subjugated and annexed: let us now take a survey of the internal situation of France itself, and endeavour to ascertain the chances of surmounting the obstacles which remain to be opposed.

I have never been one of those who have thought that the power of France has been augmented proportionally with the extent of her territorial acquisitions. It is even a position from

which I widely dissent. We must, in instances of this kind, take into account, not only the nature of the acquisition, but the mode of acquiring. When a powerful state extends its rule over fresh conquests, or receives under its protection persecuted provinces which flee to it for succour, by a mild and equitable administration, the affections of its new subjects may be gained, and the tie may become durable. This must depend on management. But when we consider the manner in which France has enlarged her dominion, and the manner in which it has been retained, it is totally impossible that the spirit of revolt can be repressed, except by a strong military force. When this is the case, when a country is kept possession of by the mere rigour of martial law, all the advantages which flow from affection or union necessarily cease; and although much may still be extorted by power, yet the expences of supporting that power absorb every superfluity, and the natural supplies and regular income, which are alone beneficially, because permanently, productive, are lost. Every thing is exacted with a reluctance bordering on denial, and nothing but the harshest measures can wring from the people the contributions which are required. The resources of a country so abused, must necessarily dwindle, till at last the diminished

receipts

receipts of these exactions are consumed in the expence of maintaining troops for the suppression of rebellion.

If therefore we contemplate the map of Europe, we shall find that the immense standing military force of France, amounting to near 600,000 men, is so distributed over her vast empire, in order to keep her own subjects in submission, that any formidable army, assembled on any particular frontier, would expose the interior, from which it must partly be drawn, to the dangers of popular insurrection and civil war.

The wisest policy which France could pursue, would be to return, as quickly as possible, to the situation in which she was placed previously to the revolution. She should reduce her overgrown extent on the continent, and, abandoning the greatest part of her territorial conquests, reserve every effort whether of force, or industry, or negotiation, for the recovery of her colonies, and the restoration of her trade. If she could, for such objects, exchange her continental dominion, the benefit would be beyond computation. In these days, territorial power must be blended with commercial success. These were the prolific sources of her former greatness and prosperity, and by these alone can her real strength be regenerated, and a regular and peaceable government

carried on. The fever of battle cannot for ever last. The violence of its exertions impairs and exhausts the constitution of the most vigorous state; and the arm which, for a course of years, has wielded the sword with resistless fury, is at last worn out, and falls nerveless and harmless to the ground. France in time of war may preserve, or even enlarge, her present boundaries; but as long as she maintains them, she can never know repose. She must keep up a military force to guard against foreign invasion, and suppress domestic revolt, which will drain her to the dregs, and which must lay the foundation of ceaseless contention. The history of the world sufficiently proves the folly of extending a frontier, beyond those limits which nature seems to ordain, and which no vigilance or exertion can secure. These overgrown empires are exposed to endless shocks, till at length the pedestal crumbles under the weight of the superstructure. The desires of man may be boundless, expressive of the eternal constitution of his mind; but his powers are finite, and partake of the weakness of his bodily functions. The territories which France has acquired shine therefore with a deceitful splendour. They may afford a temporary field for plunder, but they are never likely to yield substantial or durable advantages. They are too distantly removed from the

the seat of government, and too contiguous to antient connexions, to be weaned from confirmed prejudices. The variety of manners and habits, of local customs, privileges, and laws, which distinguish them, and to which they are indissolubly attached, render the change still more revolting, and seem to interdict the possibility of melting them down into one mass, of amalgamating their propensities, or making them conform to the despotic arrangements of a new master. The arm which they ought to regard as a protecting power to uphold and cherish them, they perceive hovering over them, brandishing a rod of iron, which is intended to terrify, to controul, and to crush. The heart of the empire is too remote from these emaciated limbs to impart health, or warmth, or vigour to their circulation. They are exposed to all the evils, but partake of none of the blessings of life. An antipathy is thus created which is not likely to be extinguished, as it proceeds from radical causes, and is confirmed by a compound perception of present suffering and forfeited ease. These feelings must rapidly exhaust even the few negative benefits which may be supposed to arise out of the connexion, and it will at last become a burden instead of a support.

When in fact we investigate the real situation

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of France, divested of all the pomp and circumstance of its visible power and extent, I know of no country that is more truly an object of commiseration. All that it formerly possessed of merit and worth; all that claimed our respect from learning, arts, religion, or morals, the splendour of rank, the politeness of manners, and the refinement of taste, have disappeared; and we now behold a people plunged into every vice, and glorying in every crime. The inherent levity, frivolity, and cruelty, of the French nation have continued to exist, without being tempered or eclipsed by any of those generous feelings for which men of high descent and liberal education are generally conspicuous.

Since, however the renewal of war, whatever magic may have encircled it before, the intrinsic value of the character of this people is completely revealed. Any sagacity short of brutal may now also decypher the character of their chief; a man who, in no one instance of his abandoned course, can have challenged the esteem of any friend to virtue or humanity. It is not because Bonaparte is the enemy of Britain, that Britons abhor him: it is not because he has exalted himself from a private station to a throne that he excites our indignation: but because he has, in his vitious career, perpetrated every crime; because the steps,

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by which he has ascended, are polluted with infamy, and stained with blood. Who was a more bitter enemy to this country than Washington, or who more calculated to produce those feelings which arise out of a sense of injury, and are aggravated by a recollection of defeat? Yet who was more respected in this country than Washington? A proof that we have the generosity to admire and to esteem a great man, however adverse his name and exertions may have been, in those respects which are most likely to wound the pride, and humiliate the feelings, of a high-spirited nation.

The success of Bonaparte has also been surprising; but it has only proved, what has been often proved before, that Providence, at times, selects the vilest instruments to fulfil its ends. That he should have reached the summit of his hopes, by the same conduct by which he first introduced himself to notice, is illustrative of the profligate consistency of his character. But he has possibly been raised to so conspicuous an eminence, only that his fall may be the more remarkable; and I cannot help thinking, that he is reserved as some signal instance of vengeance which may be held forth as a terrible example to future usurpers. His character is compounded of all that is treacherous or cruel. The great

stretch

stretch of his mind consists in planning with impenetrable artifice what he executes with appalling desperation. He wears the mask of hypocrisy till he can cast it away with effect: he then imposes on the fears of those whom he controuls, by the hardihood of the contrivance, and the celerity of the action. It is thus that he has freed himself from every competitor. It is thus that he overawed Sieyes, dismissed the Directory, and deposed his colleagues in the consulship. It is thus that he ensnared Moreau, at one time the most popular man in France, adored by the army, respected by his enemies, the most successful general that the revolution had produced, and who is now leading a life of exile, insignificance, and disgrace at Cadiz, with two of Bonaparte's retainers perpetually at his elbow.

I must, nevertheless, contend that Bonaparte, however successful he may have been, does not possess one of the distinctive features of a truly great mind. He is only great from the littleness of others; he is only terrible from the dastardly fears of those who are bound to oppose him. When we analyze his character, even its false splendour disappears, and nothing but its meanness remains. His vanity is excessive; his love of pomp puerile; his ambition inordinate and inconsistent. He has no moderation, no generosity, no command of his passions. He is endowed

dowed neither with the comprehension of the statesman, nor the detail of the financier. He has neither powers of eloquence, nor dignity of deportment. His courage betrays the desperate sallies of a maniac, and his military talents have, in numberless instances, been surpassed. Still people are apt to ask, how, with all these defects, has he been able to attain his present situation? My answer is, that these very defects have, in no small degree, contributed to his elevation. His perseverance is unconquerable, his cunning inscrutable, his activity indefatigable. Being, at the same time, destitute of every virtuous principle, he has not been retarded by those restraints which influence the motives, and operate on the actions, of other men. Villainy first marked him out for distinction, which a pliant subserviency secured to him; and that power which fortune bestowed was soon rendered accessary to more expanded views. One situation opened the road to another. He trampled down every fence that interrupted his progress. His dark working soul conducted him through all the labyrinths of guilt, and enabled him to explore the most intricate mazes of wickedness. It led him to stop at no sacrifice, to be startled at no crime; but, as his interest required, to save, with a smile, his most bitter enemy, or to assassinate, without compunction,

his most confidential friend. By such measures has he acquired the dominion which he holds: by such measures does he design to retain its possession.

With omnipotent sway over a humiliated people, whose faintest murmurs he can instantly stifle; pursuing a plan of action which professedly holds in thorough scorn all public opinion; equally disregarding religion, morality, or justice, the rights of his own subjects, or those of foreign states; surrounded by the satellites of his vengeance, who execute, with ready obedience, his sanguinary decrees; regardless of of the means; pursuing with unalterable appetency his end: and, if he but succeed, quite indifferent whether by assassination or poison, by the subversion of domestic order, or the invasion of a neutral country, by the abrogation of solemn ordinances, or the promulgation of fresh mandates:—such a man, with such a force, can, within the limits of his sphere, accomplish any thing.

But what has he done where he has been valiantly and cordially opposed? What is become of his threats against this country? He has, it is true, constructed his boats, and marshalled his troops. So far depended on his pleasure. But here he has stopped. Has he ventured to invade

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our shores? Has he forgotten his solemn pledge to come in person to Britain? Where is this mighty captain, who was to head the celebrated battalions of France, and to deliver up this island to pillage and slaughter? Has his change of station made him more prudent, and, in proportion to the elevation of his title, has he lowered the grandeur of his designs? Does he then prefer to revel in the magnificence of his usurped office; to riot in the plunder of his new subjects; and to be a witness of the servility of their cringing adulation; to the risk of this mighty project? Does he prefer the passing pomp and state of his polluted dignities, the fulsome flattery of his vulgar courtiers, the silent prostration of a degraded and frivolous people, to the noise of camps, the danger of battles, and the hazardous inconvenience of keeping his word? He has, indeed, so far prospered; and the object of his ambition, for which he has been so long sighing, he has at last obtained. But with pre-eminence of rank, has he acquired the love of his people, or the respect of mankind? Is the pillow of state a pillow of repose; or do the guards which surround his throne, relieve him from the dread of the assassin's knife?

With what mingled horror and disgust do we turn from the spectacle which Paris has lately

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exhibited: that persecuted, that insulted city, so recently the slaughter-house of royalty, the scene of massacre and torture; whose kennels were running with blood; whose pavement was scattered with mangled carcases; whose dungeons are still crowded with innocent victims. These appalling recollections have been obliterated by the excesses of festive debauch and drunken exhilaration. The buffooneries and capers of mercenaries have been engaged by the government, to exhibit their antics for the delusion and gratification of a truly swinish multitude. And why this change, ye inconsiderate and abject people? Because a tyrant has, for the last six years, been trampling on your privileges; because, previously to that period, he was himself a chief actor in all the dreadful crimes which you witnessed; because he afterwards, at Toulon, in Italy, and in Egypt, displayed the most sanguinary cruelty and the most treacherous baseness; because he has subverted a constitution over which he was appointed to preside, and which, by oath, he was bound to obey; because he has consigned you to miseries which fifty years of tranquillity and regular government will scarcely be sufficient to repair; because, by a system of unparalleled artifice and perfidy, he has at length climbed up to the pinnacle of his ambition; because

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he now proclaims to the world that you are his slaves, that he has set himself up as an idol which you are commanded to worship, as a master whom you are compelled to obey. Be wise, ye frivolous Parisians, seeing how ye are enthralled! Be grateful for the childish pastimes which his bounty deigns to grant, and which are so compatible with your emasculated minds—But venture not to remonstrate! Be silent in your sufferings! The act has been your own! Talk not of politics; blame not public measures; find no fault with your administrators. Legions of spies, informers, and executioners, encompass you; and dungeons, and guillotines, are gaping for their victims!

If any act that was ever submitted to human contemplation be worthy of exciting the extreme of ridicule, indignation, and disgust, it is the late act which raised Bonaparte to the imperial dignity. And does this pretender imagine, that, because pope Leo III. placed the imperial diadem on the brow of Charlemagne, the same office, performed towards him by pope Pius VIIth, can in any degree assimilate his character with the brilliant virtues and extraordinary endowments of that truly great man? In the one case, it was the powerful head of a most powerful church, consecrating, through the superstition of mankind,

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the legal rights of the most potent prince in Christendom; in the other, it is the degraded head of a degraded church, prostituting his small remnants of dignity, by assisting at the inauguration of an usurper. And dares the wretch, who is polluted with every crime which power or meanness can commit; who has massacred and poisoned in the mass; or, when it better suited his purpose, has administered, without remorse, the secret dagger and the secret bowl; who has himself been the perpetrator of every blasphemy and abomination; dares he, with mockery in his heart, kneel down, and offer up his hollow supplications to the throne of Almighty God? What must we think of the audacious impiety of such a petition, or of the abject servility of the chief of a once mighty priesthood who could condescend to officiate at such a ceremony?

But can it be expected, on any sound principles of human reason or experience, that this tragical farce (if I may so express myself) can for many years endure? I hear people quoting examples from eastern story, or from the barbarous ages of our own quarter of the globe. But where is the parallel? Will such precedents in any shape apply to the present state of Europe? Is it even to be imagined, that a new dynasty can, in these times, be successfully planted, and perpetuated, in the

the very heart of Christendom? And who is the founder of this empire; or what are his claims to its possession, or to the transmission of it to his posterity? A man without rank, without connexions, and, above all, without virtue: who is an alien to the soil which he has subjugated, and over which he would eternise his sway. The throne itself and most of the great offices of emolument and trust filled by strumpets and assassins, robbers and swindlers, peculating officers, hungry mechanics, and confirmed vagabonds. Really, when we consider what the character and family of this man is, the imperial titles, which have lately been so lavishly conferred, are the most acrimonious satire (though not at all intended) on royalty and high descent, that was ever promulged to the ridicule of the world. But is it possible to conceive that these transactions can be perpetuated; that all the strong prejudices of mankind in favour of old families and hereditary distinction, are to be obliterated by a despotic decree, and to be merged in the contemplation of this fustian dignity and trumpery parade?* With all his powerful protection,

* Bonaparte, it is said, not satisfied with his own elevation, designs to erect two new kingdoms in Italy and Holland for his two *imperial* brothers, *Prince* Joseph and *Prince* Louis, or his *imperial* brother-in-law, *Prince* Murat.

how

how few of the antient nobility of France has Bonaparte been able to persuade to adorn his court, a place in which their honour would feel an irretrievable disgrace? Some indeed have so stigmatised their names, but only such as were already covered with contempt, and stained with every vice which avarice or impiety can commit.*

I pity the feelings of those foreigners whose official situations require them to attend at these plebeian levees; to observe the ceremonial of this upstart court; and to bow before wretches who are among the most worthless of mankind. If ever a peace should be again signed between England and Bonaparte, it is to be hoped that English gentlemen will a little consult their own dignity, and that not one, except those whose painful duty enjoins it, will degrade himself by bending the body before such arrogant pretension. Those who, during the last peace, crouded in the *Consul's* train, have paid severely for their

* That any of the antient and still independent sovereigns of Europe should have so far forgotten their dignity or their interest, as to acknowledge the imperial title of this usurper, can never be sufficiently regretted. They have, by that fatal and criminal act, as far at least as opinion is concerned, sanctioned his claim, and, as far as the influence of their example reaches, have completely overthrown the antient public law of Europe.

humility

humility or their curiosity; nor, should the occasion again present itself, would the *Emperor* be inclined to treat them with greater delicacy or forbearance. But let us turn from this odious theme, on which I have already dwelt too long, to the sober contemplation of this mighty boaster, and ascertain, notwithstanding all his vaunts, what he has been able to accomplish, since the renewal of hostilities, against this country.

If we reduce his threats to the standard of truth, what remains? Nothing! absolutely nothing! No one battle fought with success, no one enterprise of moment even attempted. The only object which the French have effected, was capturing by surprise their own settlement of Goree, from which we again expelled them in less than a week.

They have indeed assembled a mighty host of soldiers, and an innumerable fleet of boats opposite the British coast; but which, so far from venturing to face us, they have taken special care to protect by every kind of fortification and entrenchment, by batteries and chains in every direction, from the vengeance of our attacks. Are these then, after such a use of their preparations, a people formidable to the independence of this country; a people calculated to make a fearful impression on us; a people likely to subdue us?

On the contrary, we are the assailants, they are the besieged. We have, with our shipping, drawn a line of circumvallation round their coast; we have blockaded every harbour. We can, with perfect impunity, insult their shores from Ostend to Bayonne in the channel, and, in the Mediterranean, from Perpignan to Nice. Scarcely a boat can quit or enter their havens without being exposed to our assaults; and, instead of venturing on the open sea, they are forced to skulk along, under the protection of their batteries, to avoid inevitable destruction.

What then is this boasted superiority of France, this Leviathan which was to swallow us up. An imperious challenge was sent, which told us that we could no longer contend single-handed. We met the defiance with scorn, and have proved its falsehood. To what then is the power of France reduced? To a conduct most unworthy of its means, to acts of cowardly barbarity, to robbery and piracy. How are her forces employed? In pillaging her own subjects, her obedient dependents, and her weak allies; in laying sinking governments under ruinous contributions; in exercising acts of petty vengeance against petty states; in invading neutral territories to seize a gallant prince, who, for want of a powerful interference, was basely assassinated:

ed; or a diplomatic gentleman, who, in consequence of a powerful interference, was as basely delivered up. Princes, who dare not refuse, are ordered to attend at a degrading coronation; instructions are given to Ambassadors at foreign courts, wherever it can be done with safety, to demean themselves with supercilious haughtiness and insolent indifference towards the sovereigns to whom they are accredited; members of governments which are nominally free, but intrinsically dependent, are arrested for exercising those functions which their duties enjoin; and their colleagues are menaced with immediate chastisement, if they do not instantly reverse objectionable decrees, or if they venture in future to intermeddle, in the slightest degree, with their own affairs.

Having thus ascertained the total incapacity of Bonaparte, as far as events have hitherto been disclosed, to molest this country, let us next examine what we have been able to accomplish against him. In spite of all the idle declamation which we have heard; in spite of all the grave accusations which have been adduced against the energies of Great Britain; by a candid statement of facts, considering the relative position of the two countries, it will appear that we have no reasonable cause to be dissatisfied with our exer-

tions. So far from agreeing that nothing has been done, I am willing to think, and I hope shall be able to prove, that we have done a great deal; that, instead of having tarnished, we have brightened the glory of the nation, and that what has been already achieved may be regarded as the forerunner of more signal success.

When first we resumed our hostile position, the government of the country was in the hands of an incompetent administration, incompetent both in talent and vigour; and, during whose rule, almost every thing was as unwisely conceived as inexpertly executed.

The peace of Amiens, considering the high ground on which Great Britain then stood, was, perhaps, the most galling accommodation to which she ever submitted, calculated not only to sink her in the national opinion, but in the opinion of the whole world. It seemed to be a confession, extorted from our weakness, that we surrendered the palm of victory and honour to France; and that we were no longer able to cope with the superior strength and fortune of her arms. We all recollect what exhilaration it caused at the moment; what dejection arose out of it on reflection. The childish arrogance of Bonaparte prevented him, however, from taking full advantage of the phlegmatic supineness, or timorous precaution, of the

the British cabinet; and the country was saved, in the first instance, more from his insane precipitation, than from its own sense of danger.

His reiterated and undisguised acts of insolence, rapacity, and contempt, roused us at length from our lethargy; and, when the merits of the treaty came to be fairly canvassed, we discovered how miserably we had been cajoled. This treaty, which had been so lately a subject of exultation, was now disapproved of in the same proportion; and the mode in which the chief consul presumed to dictate that the stipulations which it contained should be interpreted and executed, inflamed the indignation of every one who felt for the honour of his country. The ministry, however, still continued to waver and protract, fearful to proceed to extremities, till at last the unanimous voice of the nation demanded vengeance.

War revived, but the sinews of war were dreadfully relaxed. Our navy had been dismantled, our naval stores disposed of, our veteran troops disbanded, and the income tax repealed. All these measures had been precipitated for the sake of transient popularity, or misconceived frugality, during thirteen months of broken repose. Bonaparte, in the mean time, had been augmenting his army, repairing his navy, and carrying on, with unremitting zeal, every project

ject of future annoyance. We had also restored into his hands nearly all the brilliant conquests of an eight years' war. Nothing then could well be more disheartening than the reduced state of this country when hostilities recommenced: for we had not only granted a respite to our bitterest enemy, which he had most advantageously employed, but we had, in an inverse proportion, debilitated our own faculties of offence and resistance.

The unanimous zeal and patriotic spirit of the country interposed at this perilous crisis to rescue it from impending perdition, and the incapacity of the government was supplied and rectified by the loyal energies of the people. One favourable circumstance, as I have already observed, and that not an unimportant one, had, however, resulted from the peace. It completely got rid of the old grounds of the war with France, on which (although I was perfectly satisfied both as to its justice and necessity) such various and opposite sentiments were entertained. It gave the people an opportunity of tasting those imagined sweets which they foolishly conceived must be the consequence of peace *on any terms;* and which, on that account, they had been so clamorous to obtain. It, at the same time, demonstrated to them the error of their expectations. It proved to them, in the plainest way, the absolute *impossibility* of maintaining

maintaining any relations of amity or reconciliation with the government of France, as it was then constituted; and the absolute *necessity* of again opposing it, to preserve their independence. The sense of danger vibrated through every quarter of the land. The impulse, like the electric shock, was felt simultaneously. The call of duty, of honour, of patriotism, beat high in every breast. No exertion was thought too active; no privation, no sacrifice, too great. The olive withered in the hand which again grasped the sword, and the youth of Britain flocked round the throne of a patriot king. They offered themselves as an armour of defence to the wants of the state. Never was a purer fervour, a sincerer devotion, a stronger feeling of public magnanimity testified, than that which at this critical juncture was displayed by the voluntary effusions of this great country. It came home to every British bosom. It proved that the old stock of British virtue, which our illustrious ancestors had engrafted on the genuine tree of liberty, was neither exhausted nor impaired; and that in spite of all the silly experiments which had been made to improve or vitiate its growth, its native vigour had resisted the impresion, and it still flourished in unadultered purity and health.

I have been astonished at the ridicule and levity with

with which the volunteers have frequently been treated, even amidst the gravest deliberations, and by men from whom one would not have expected such foolish or such malicious irony. There may be different and more efficient modes respecting their organization, but that circumstance does not in the least detract from *their* merit, which I must ever insist has a full claim to the gratitude of the community.

The want of an advantage often strikes the perceptions of mankind more forcibly than its possession; and the utility of a measure is frequently most plainly demonstrated by its opposite. For the sake of argument, therefore, I will put a case, and suppose that a contrary spirit had been manifested: that this zeal, instead of declaring in favour of the government, had declared against it. What would, under such circumstances, have become of the commonwealth, under the guidance of a feeble administration, reduced as our regular troops and militia then were? The very idea makes one shudder through every fibre. Let not then these patriotic citizens be traduced or underrated. The mere declaration of their sentiments, and the alacrity with which they proferred their services, first gave confidence to the state; and, in spite of the romances or invectives of some, or the vulgar and absurd scurrility

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of others, the country acknowledges the obligation. Far be it from me to attempt to compare them with regular troops. They cannot be expected to possess an equal degree of science or skill. But still their immense numbers, animated by their courage and zeal, in which they are not deficient, would make great amends for defect in discipline; and should their services be ever required, I am confident that they will not disappoint public expectation.

Zeal is assuredly one of the first qualifications of a soldier; and, when it urges on a people to the defence of their native soil, is almost uniformly an overmatch for every impediment. Where true patriotism prevails, each citizen communicates the sum of his faculties to the aggregate force of the state. He shares in its dangers and its success. Almost every country has been found competent to its defence, when that defence has been once firmly resolved on; and a nation of freemen is not to be conquered by myriads of invaders. When soldiers are inspired by a sense of duty, and a genuine love of glory and independence, they readily imbibe the discipline of war, and are easily trained to the duties and hardships of camps.

These maxims were most incontrovertibly proved, in ancient times, by the Grecian and Roman

states; in modern times, by Switzerland and Holland; and, in our own times, by America and France. What was it in these countries, at all these different eras, that insured success, but the voluntary spirit of the people? It prevailed over all the regular veterans that could be brought against them. National spirit and unanimity are, in fact, the ground-work of all effectual resistance. Every thing else follows. Men, fired by these feelings, engage with an intrepidity which nothing can daunt. The idea that none can be good soldiers but those who have seen actual service, is a proposition which every year's experience totally disproves. They frequently behave as gallantly the first time they go into action as the most practised battalions. Were it otherwise, the use and efficiency of our regular army would be considerably diminished. Not being a continental power, our troops have not the frequent opportunities which are afforded to those of many other countries of mingling in battle; yet, when they do engage, they have seldom been found the last at attack, or the first at retreat. Soldiers are no doubt improved, in certain respects, like men in other professions, by practice. Still the foundation of a military character is courage and zeal, qualities which are the effect of nature and civil education: the rest is acquired by a very short apprenticeship.

prenticeship. I am here speaking of soldiers, not officers—whose qualifications are infinitely more complicated, and must be the result of genius, application, and a long course of practical and theoretical knowledge combined. If, then, our soldiers be led on by skilful commanders, they may again be victorious, as they have often before been, the first time they flesh their swords. I do not, therefore, as far as the safety of the commonwealth is concerned, look at the gloomy side of things—on the contrary, I look at the bright side, and fully expect that the wreath of conquest and glory will continue to adorn our warriors' brows. Let us, however, as I proposed, see what has been already done, and on that foundation rear the fabric of future hope.

If we have not been able to land armies on the continent of Europe; to crush the progress of French extortion; and to snatch the neighbouring states from their ruinous connexion with France; as far as our power and influence extend, as far as has depended on the means of this country, we have neither been idle nor unsuccessful. The influence of France on the continent must always be greater than that of England. She is a military empire, situated in the very centre of continental action. Her very position and population must ever rank her among the leading states;

and, humbled as she has been at particular periods, she has always regained her equipoise. Our influence is derived from less direct sources; but, on that very account, our interference must be generally serviceable, and can never be dangerous, to the balance of power.* Throughout our his-

* France, particularly since the revolution, has been continually making a violent outcry against us as the monopolizers of the world; and has been endeavouring to divert the contemplation of Europe from her own ambitious projects, by exciting jealousy against what she is pleased to term the despotism of our commercial and and naval greatness. These charges, which, under the auspices of the French government, were a few years back urged by Hauterive, with some plausibility, were completely exposed and refuted in Mr. Gentz's most able answer, He has plainly shewn, that our commercial and naval greatness, instead of being detrimental, is highly advantageous to Europe, as it has enabled us to keep pace with the great continental powers, and frequently to interfere with success in the preservation of the political balance. That balance which has been often preserved, but was never endangered by us, continued secure till the continental aggrandisement of France completely overset it. Here then, in her own actual example, is a complete exposition of the futility and falsehood of the charges which have been brought against us. In all our political concerns, particularly for the last 150 years, the grand object of our alliances has been to sustain the balance of power. France, on the contrary, has been ever aiming to subvert it, and from the blindness, credulity, and pusillanimity of other states, she has at length effected her design. Our long contest with Louis the XIVth, was to prevent the junction of the French and Spanish monarchies. Our assistance to the king of Prussia, in the seven

tory, for the last three hundred years, we have seldom been opposed to France in continental war, but when France has been aiming at the subversion of the general liberties of Europe.

As however we stand more immediately opposed in rivality to France, we have wounded her in her most vital interests. We have nearly annihilated her navy and her commerce, those abundant sources of power and wealth. The very remnant of her once potent marine, which, in better days, was able to contend with the fleets of Britain, is, to all intents and purposes, completely ruined. Ever since Lord Nelson's decisive victory, which struck a damp into the heart of every mariner of France, she has never ventured to shew herself as a naval power, and, indeed, for the greatest part of the time, has tamely allowed herself to be blocked up in her own ports by British squadrons. Ships she still has, but in a few years more, there will scarcely be a sailor in France who has ever been at sea. We have absolutely thrown up an entrenchment round her coast, which confines her at home, and the manœuvres of her ships are circumscribed to her own harbours.

seven years' war, was to curb the preponderating power of Austria. In both instances we aided the weak against the strong, and in both instances were successful.

But

But what can be the notions of sailors, (if such they can be termed) whose experience and practical knowledge are so closely tied up? They may, to be sure, as often as they please, smell their own powder, and listen to the report of their own guns. In their excursions and tacks, within the circumference of their own ports, they may reef topsails, and lower yards, at their leisure, and, in the event of squalls or tempestuous weather, they may find soundings, and discover good anchorage, without the risk of shipwreck. This may be all very pretty show, and, on the score of amusement, may be ranked with the dances and songs of their operas, the ridiculous buffooneries of their little theatres, or the gimcracks, and gewgaws, and nonsensical and vulgar parade of their coronations. But what can be hoped for by the wildest speculators, should they venture to encounter us on that element which is now peculiarly our own; to wage war with those hardy veterans who, for the last twelve years, have been braving every danger, and ploughing the main in every latitude without a competitor? We might now, with some plea of propriety, affix Van Tromp's broom to the mast head, for we have absolutely swept the seas of every opponent, and the British flag, in every quarter of the globe, rides decidedly triumphant. Even our loaded merchantmen, as has been lately

most

most proudly proved, are an overmatch for French ships of war.

No circumstance could have so potently tended to sink the French marine into absolute contempt as the brilliant event, which, in the month of February, 1804, took place between the India shipping and the French squadron under Linois. This admiral, in the service of France, was absolutely beaten off, and compelled to fly before a fleet of heavily laden trading ships, of whose sailing he had received intelligence; which he had been even lying wait for, to capture; which he designedly fell in with; and which was only saved by their bravery and his cowardice. If the case had been reversed, the squadron British, and the merchantmen French, we may, I think, venture to assert, that every one would have been taken or sunk.

To India and America we can turn with satisfaction on our military exploits. In the former country the French party has been completely suffocated, and we have nearly concluded a most brilliant war, by the destruction of the Mahratta confederacy. We have added immense territories to our former dominions; and, whilst the French have been entirely expelled, we have, by our fresh acquisitions, firmly established our empire in that quarter. In this sense only have the additional provinces which we have gained been consequential.

tial. Our territorial concerns in India are certainly a losing concern, but our trade is of immense importance; and whatever tends to its extension or security must be regarded as a national benefit.*

In the West Indies we have already nearly recovered by our arms what an incautious negotiation had too easily ceded. St. Lucia, Tobago, Demerara, Surinam, Berbice, Issiquibo, St. Pierre, and Miquelon, are again ours. From St. Domingo, the trade of which formerly produced to France an annual profit of 3,000,000*l.* sterling, the French are finally driven, without the hope of return.†

* The only possession of any importance which we were suffered to retain by the treaty of Amiens was the Dutch settlements in the island of Ceylon, which from their situation afford an additional security to our commerce in the peninsula of India, and at the same time place the remaining Dutch settlements in the Sunda and Molucca isles very much at our mercy. If we again capture the latter, I hope that the precaution will be taken, before they are given up, of transplanting the seeds and spices which are peculiar to them to our own islands. Trinidad might be valuable, but it would require an importation of 200,000 slaves to cultivate it.

† The value of produce which France, under the old government, annually received from her islands and colonies, in coffee, sugar, cochineal, indigo, cotton, and other commodities, has been rated by Mr. Necker as high as 150,000,000 of livres, equal to above 6,000,000*l.* sterling. From the exportation of these productions, and of the merchandize and manufactures of Europe

The miserable remnant of Rochambeau's army, which sailed from Europe 60,000 strong, was saved from the fury of the natives by the huma-

rope, to foreign countries, she received 70,000,000 of livres. Such were the advantages formerly resulting from her colonial trade and possessions. In the year 1801, two years after Bonaparte had seized on the administration of the government, the amount of all her colonial productions received into France did not exceed 2,077,000 of livres, and her shipments were as low as 208,000, which sum was expended chiefly in provisions. She was therefore obliged to have recourse to other countries for necessary supplies, and she received, through the medium of Holland, Denmark, Prussia, and the Hanseatic towns, sugar to the amount of 51,000,000 of livres, and coffee to the amount 41,000,000 of livres. These articles were chiefly purchased from Great Britain, so that the excess paid by France was the profit derived by us, and the other powers through whose hands they passed. France also, in the course of the above year, imported from the United States colonial produce in tobacco and cotton cloths, to the amount of 22,788,000 of livres, and through other channels, second and third hand, raw materials necessary for her own arts and manufactures, to the amount of 1193,244,000. of livres. She thus paid, during the above year, to foreign countries 308,032,000 of livres, or upwards of 12,800,000 sterling, which she formerly drew from her own settlements. France has indeed made a great effort to recover them, particularly St. Domingo, in which however she has failed, and has exhausted herself more than ever. In the year eleven, the government demanded a credit of 300,000,000 to cover the expences of the year ten: yet a deficit of 56,000,000 was a pretext for the revolution.—This note has been chiefly taken from a manuscript tract of an eminent political writer.

nity of the British, who carried them off in their ships, and who, for this act of kindness, were repaid by the blackest ingratitude. Toussaint was entrapped, and basely suffered to perish in the dungeons of France; but Dessalines has been more wary. Like Bonaparte in Europe, he has been also invested with the purple; and in their descent, their cruelties, and their usurpations, as well as their imperial titles, they are worthy competitors.

Thus, although the colossal sway of this Corsican upstart be still flourishing on the continent of Europe, from the other three quarters of the globe he is literally expelled. His name and his power are alike despised. They are a dead letter; and French influence is as unfelt in those regions as that of the petty princes of the interior of Africa is unknown to us.

With all this humiliating defalcation of political consequence, the commerce of France is also extinct. The myriads of ships, which, under the protection of a well-appointed navy, formerly covered the seas, and crowded her havens; which, whilst they served as an ample nursery for her seamen, were employed in the transportation of the immense produce of her colonies; which enabled her to carry on a prodigious and most lucrative traffic to the East and

West

West Indies, America, Africa, the Levant, the Mediterranean, the Baltic, and all the maritime states of Europe, bringing home raw materials for which she bartered the growth or the manufactures of her own country, diffusing opulence and industry, vigour and happiness, through every province, are now rotting in idleness at home. All these prolific sources of prosperity, and the innumerable currents which branched from them, have been cut off by the interference and superiority of Britain. What moreover France has lost, Britain has gained, for in proportion as the commerce of France has declined that of Britain has flourished *. And is this to have ac-

* Our present extensive possessions in the East and West Indies secure to us, in a great degree, the continuance of this commercial prosperity. We are now, among the European nations, nearly the exclusive proprietors of sugar, coffee, cochineal, cottons, silks, dye-woods and drugs, articles which have become of indispensable necessity to feed the luxuries, or administer to the wants, of the continental states. Their industry, their arts and their manufactures, as well as many of their enjoyments, are thus rendered chiefly dependent upon us for supply. It is this decisive commercial superiority which has principally contributed to uphold the credit of this country, and has enabled it to support one of the most expensive wars that was ever waged. The finances of France, on the contrary, have sunk under the pressure, and her whole financial system is involved in difficulties and embarrassments from which, under her present government, she can never be expected to emerge.

complished nothing? People, however, are not wanting who still pertinaciously maintain this solecism—and, by the promulgation of their false prophecies, derived from a spurious parentage, strive to generate discontent, and to throw a damp on the generous ardour of the country. But it has, I hope, been unanswerably shown, that this language, however it may apply to France, is totally inapplicable to Britain; and that these accusations, as far as we are concerned, are as malicious as they are false.

A new enemy has just entered the lists against us, and the antient connexion between France and Spain has been actively revived, on, however, very different principles, and under very different auspices, from the old family compact.

When we consider the immense wealth, which, during the first few years of the revolution, were poured into the treasury of France from the pillage of palaces, churches, monasteries, and private houses; from the seizure of the lands and revenues belonging to the crown, the clergy, the nobility, and other emigrants; when we consider the enormous plunder of foreign states—when we add to all this the 3,000,000,000 of livres, equal to 125,000,000l. sterling, which in assignats and mandats were annulled by the directory, and the amount of the present debt which has been lately accumulated, we can form some idea of the boundless profusion with which the public affairs of that nation are transacted, the destructive extent of its actual expenditure, and the manner in which it purposes to provide for future exigencies.

Unhappy

Unhappy Spain, how must thou feel thyself fallen from thine antient grandeur, to be reduced to the pitiable necessity of forming an alliance with a government which has cut off the elder branch of thy royal race, from one of the most splendid empires in Europe, and which is preparing the same sad destiny for thee; whose hands are still red with the blood of thy monarch's most illustrious relatives; and whose mind would fain embrue them in his own! And against what power art thou arming? Against the only one that has had the fortitude and generosity to fight for the cause of humanity, to withstand the torrent, which, without its opposition, would have, long since, ingulfed Europe, and have overset every throne and altar which still remain.

Much has been said about the justice, much about the policy, of the conduct of this country towards Spain. I can perceive no intricacy whatever in the solution of this problem; for, when disencumbered of those extraneous appendages with which it has been surcharged, all those heavy accusations, which have been so gravely urged against the British government, instantly fall to the ground.

By the treaty of St. Ildefonso, which was signed by France and Spain in the month of August 1796, an offensive and defensive alliance

was

was mutually entered into, binding the contracting parties, in case of future war, to assist each other with a certain contingent of men and ships. Thus much Spain acknowledges in her manifesto, but endeavours to evade the responsibility necessarily attaching to such an engagement, by declaring that she neither provided the one nor the other, but paid instead an equivalent in money, and thus preserved her neutrality *.

Now let us for a moment examine this curious mode of reasoning. It is very evident, that, by the stipulations of the treaty alluded to, whatever the amount of the contingent might be, the moment France and we became belligerents, opposed to each other, Spain, unless at our requisition she formally and explicitly renounced her engagement with France, became a party against us, and might fairly have been considered and treated by us as an enemy. But let us attend to the futility of the explanation. What does an equivalent mean, but something of equal value, as the very term denotes, to the party that requires the fulfilment of a contract? The French, conducted as their government has long been, are not a people disposed to make abatements, or to shrink from a legal demand, especially when it is

* See the Declaration of War by Spain, dated Madrid, December 14, 1804.

due

due from a state that dreads their interference, and pays an implicit obedience to their commands. France, when first she applied to Spain, wanted neither men, nor ships, but *money*—at least it was for money that she was most immediately distressed, to meet her urgent exigencies; to continue on foot her immense establishments; to feed the rapacity of men in power; to defray the extravagant expences of an upstart court; and to prepare for the magnificence of an approaching coronation. Are we then to consider this money, which, to all intents and purposes, was a war subsidy; which both the French and Spaniards regard as tantamount to other special engagements; and which the French themselves admit to be a full and ample fulfilment of the terms of a warlike coalition, as a totally innoxious provision?

But this was by no means the only cause of dissatisfaction and dispute. Independently of these pecuniary supplies, I can aver from facts, some of which fell under my own observation, that, from the moment of the renewal of hostilities between France and this country, Spain was, till within the last few months, committing direct and positive acts of systematic warfare against us; not in a solitary instance, not as an exception against a general rule, but as a rule almost without an exception.

It is notorious to every one, who, since the breaking out of the present war, has been in the Mediterranean, or in countries adjacent to that sea, that every Spanish port, which is convenient for the purpose, has teemed with French privateers. These privateers were, in many instances, partly manned by Spaniards, Spaniards having shares in them, and enjoyed the protection of the Spanish government. They were continually on the watch in their lurking places, to which they had free access at all seasons, and in all ways. They were supplied with every want whether of provisions or naval stores; they remained there any length of time; they made captures indifferently on the open seas or within the boundaries of neutrality, and on bringing in their prizes, both ship and cargo were regularly condemned. The property thus illegally seized and disposed of, if it suited the Spanish market, was sold there; if otherwise, it was distributed among Spanish coasters, and conveyed, under the safeguard of the Spanish flag, to France, or to any other more profitable or commodious port. Nor was this pernicious system confined to Europe. In the West Indies it was pushed to still further extremities, to the great annoyance and injury of our colonial trade. In the island of Cuba, not only were prizes condemned, but a French expedition was fitted

fitted out, under the auspices of the Spanish governor, against the Bahamas, which was only abandoned in consequence of the death of Noailles, the French general, who had been appointed to the command.* Were British privateers allowed to assemble in the same manner; to remain the same time; to dispose of prizes in the same way; or to partake of any of the same privileges? Notoriously not! Was not this then another shameful breach of neutrality, and, if we had chosen so to make it, another fair cause of war?

A third ground of war was the permission granted by the court of Spain for the passage of French marines and sailors, through the Spanish territory, to man a French squadron of ships which was lying at Ferrol, and which was then watched by a British squadron of inferior force. We sustained a serious injury by this permission, as by enabling the French to increase their strength, it rendered them more equal to oppose us, and gave them a better chance of defeating our vigilance, and effecting their object, which was to

* See governor Halkett's letters to lord Hobart, dated from Bahamas, in February and April 1804 (Nos. 26, 27, and 28, of the papers laid before Parliament on the 2nd and 4th of February) confirming this account.

form a junction with the Toulon fleet. Was not this therefore a flagrant departure from neutrality?

A fourth cause of war arose, when the French, notwithstanding these supplies, fearing still that they might be unequal in a contest with the skill and courage of British sailors, prevailed on Spain to fit out her own ships, not only in Ferrol but in other ports, probably to attack the British fleet, in conjunction with the French: at all events to overawe it, and oblige it to quit an advantageous station. Was not this also a positive infraction of neutrality?*

But all the above acts, violent and flagrant as they are, were apparently only an introduction to still more decisive measures. By the eleventh article of the treaty in question, in addition to the forces which had been specially agreed on, in case they should be insufficient, it is farther covenanted, that "the two contracting powers shall put on foot the greatest forces they possibly can, as well by sea as by land, against the enemy of the power attacked."† Here then is a complete end to all qua-

* By referring to the papers presented to Parliament on the 24th of Jan. from Nos. 29 to 33, both inclusive, these points are sufficiently evident.

† See treaty of Ildefonso.

lification,

lification, and the treaty goes the whole length of the most violent state of hostility in which an enemy can be placed. The tenor and spirit of this treaty are also peculiarly offensive and scandalous, as they take from the parties all right of judgment respecting the justice or legality of war. The succours furnished are to be placed entirely at the disposal of the requiring power, which is under no obligation to give any account of the motives by which it may have been determined.* Is this then to be regarded as a treaty indifferent or innoxious to us?

We must here go a little into the principles of the law of nations, as they have been authorized by custom, and as they are supported by the opinions of the most eminent jurists. By this whole mass of authority, it has ever been admitted as an incontrovertible doctrine, founded on natural right, and confirmed by the uniform practice of civilized governments, that any hostile provision against any particular state challenges explanation; and that, if explanation be obstinately evaded, or peremptorily refused, notice of the consequences having been given, there is cause for immediate war. It certainly has very often oc-

* See article 7 of the same treaty.

 curred,

curred, that men and money both, have been furnished, by a state calling itself neutral, to a belligerent, in consequence of a previous or a temporary treaty; and that this aid, so furnished, has not led to hostility. Switzerland, for example, and several of the smaller states of Germany have, in most continental wars, for the last two hundred years, been more or less in the habit of letting out subsidiary troops. But are we thence to infer, that this practice has, by any interpretation or construction which the law of nations will bear, been admitted as a legitimate measure? This must be either conventional; or it must be tolerated from a consideration of the weakness, or want of political importance, of the community so assisting; from convenience, not necessity; from expediency, not right. It is very evident that a state aiding another at open war, from that moment departs from its neutrality, and exposes itself to the plenary consequences of such a departure. But whether the party thus injured, and against whom the assistance is provided, shall consider the aggression as the ground on which he should resist, must be entirely matter of feeling; must depend on his sense of the injury and his means of chastisement.

The *right*, however, to prevent an aid so administered, is indisputable. Were it otherwise, it would long since have been specifically defined, to what extent particular states might assist each other without forfeiting the privileges and exemptions of neutrals. If such a line be not previously settled, where or how are the limitations to be drawn? If Spain, for instance, may, without risk or censure, furnish France with fifteen ships of the line, and 24,000 troops (the number stipulated), why may she not, with the same impunity, furnish thirty sail of the line and 50,000 men; and, if these, why not her whole military and naval strength?* But who will pretend to say that an enormous sum of money, (to the amount of many millions sterling†) considered by the contracting parties as a full equivalent to the force agreed on, is not to be so regarded by us? The proposition is perfectly absurd, and, in every point of view, against nature, reason, and law.

If France and Spain, laying the terms of the treaty before us, had, at the time of its taking place, applied to us for our concurrence, and we

* It has been shewn, that, if required, she was even bound to go to this extent.

† Three millions sterling, it seems, was the sum finally agreed on, considerably above a third of the whole revenue of the Spanish empire.

had

had formally consented, then, it is evident that there would have been no ground of complaint. But if, from the mere circumstance of such a treaty having been acceded to, it were incumbent on every state of Europe immediately to remonstrate, and, in case of non-renunciation, to threaten attack, there would be no end of cavil and dispute. No particular state can previously know, for certain, that it will be affected by the provisions of a treaty. Before its operation can be felt, hundreds of accidents may arise to separate parties so bound down, or even to connect in alliance those very parties to which it is apparently most adverse. Such has been the practice and the public law of Europe for many centuries, and because an insolent upstart, setting at defiance the opinions both of past and present times, has, in its most sacred principles, presumed to violate it, are we to be guided by the varying and ambiguous rules of his new code? So far, therefore, for the *justice* of the case—let us now advert to the *policy*.

In this discussion two questions occur. The first is, whether it be our interest to tolerate, in any degree, certain illegal acts on the part of Spain, which are highly advantageous to our enemies, and proportionally detrimental to us, and as such must be considered as an egregious

infringement

infringement of the radical principles of neutrality? The second is, to what extent it may be our interest to permit such proceedings to be carried on?

In the first case, unhappily situated as Spain is with regard to France, it is *perhaps* our *interest*, it has *certainly* been our *wish*, either to overlook, or to survey with all possible mildness, particular acts of aggression. We have not been hasty in binding her down to those stricter regulations, the observance of which we might have felt inclined to enforce, had she been the absolute mistress of her own measures, and in the full exercise of her independence. Under such unfortunate circumstances, we may be easily supposed to have imagined, that the *will* did not accompany the *deed*; and that therefore, acting with reluctance, she acted in some measure without effect, and with as little detriment to us as she could possibly contrive. It must, in such a predicament, be regarded as the preponderance of an enemy operating on the means of a friend, with whom still resides the chief disposal of those means, and who, consequently, will employ them as sparingly, and render them as little mischievous, as the nature of things will admit. Amidst such difficulties, a state may have some claim to indulgence, and such indulgence has, in the instance before us, been most liberally bestowed.

I now

I now come to the consideration of the second question.

Finding that the injuries which we sustained in consequence of the conduct of Spain, by increasing, became extremely inconvenient, we, in a political point of view, were at last reduced to a simple arithmetical calculation. We had merely to ascertain what portion of this kind of hostility it was wiser to bear, than, by interference or positive controul, to run the risk of forcing a closer connexion, and of throwing the aggregate weight of opposition or attack into the same scale.

We can easily imagine a point on which such a question may balance, and the government of a country hesitate which side to prefer. But when it is reduced to this extreme nicety, a very little additional provocation must be necessary to settle the doubt. England and Spain have, for some time past, been standing in this critical posture. Since the very commencement of the war, Spain, as we have shewn, has been daily committing hostile acts, which, on our part, would have fully justified reprisals and war. But not being desirous, on various accounts, of pushing her to extremities, our convenience and humanity were coincident. We thought it both more wise and more generous to tolerate a conduct which was liable to much reproach to her, and attended with considerable

considerable injury to us, than to compel her to throw her entire resources into the hands of France. This was a forbearance by which it was natural enough for us to be actuated, whilst governed by a policy which was under the influence of great delicacy and moderation, and equally removed from the incitements of resentment or revenge: and this was the line of conduct which we adopted. But when we plainly perceived that she was forming a closer alliance, and entering into stronger engagements, with France; that she was not only furnishing a stipulated or a temporary sum, but that the total produce of her mines was transmitted almost untouched to the treasury of France; that the number of French privateers in Spanish ports, which not only met with a safe asylum, but were fitted out with every convenience with the consent of the Spanish government, was daily increasing; that the Spanish government had, at the requisition of France, granted an unmolested passage to French troops through the Spanish territories, for the purpose of annoying us; that under various pretences, but with the greatest activity, she was carrying on considerable armaments in those ports which were best adapted to injure us, and most likely to create suspicion and give umbrage; that, on our presenting remonstrance on remonstrance, all satis-

factory explanation was either evaded or postponed; that on being warned, over and over again, of the inevitable consequences of these equivocations, the same system was more or less persevered in; it surely was high time for us to feel some alarm; to suspect an alienated or hostile mind; to insist on immediate explanation; and, on that being refused, to quit our system of moderation; to resume those rights which we had long allowed to sleep, but had never relinquished; and to retaliate by open force. This was what we were clearly authorized to do for our own reparation and security, and in conformity to the strict letter of the practice and public law of the civilized world. As to the mere form of previously publishing a declaration, or recalling a minister, that is a matter of indifference, and the origin of wars for the last two centuries furnishes more precedents against than in favour of the rule.* The knowledge of our rights was matter of publicity to the whole world, and Spain had conveyed to her the most explicit assurances of our fixed intention, beyond a certain point of provocation, of abiding by them.†

* Mr. Ward, in his very able pamphlet, has clearly proved these points from historical facts.

† See the papers laid before Parliament, *passim*.

But

But mark the delicacy, and caution, and unexampled forbearance, of the British government. Observing that Spain had betrayed such unequivocal dispositions in favour of France, and that, in addition to these demonstrations, serious armaments of a very suspicious nature were going forward in her ports, at the very moment that the arrival of her galleons was expected from South America, which we were aware, if war were premeditated, would enable her to carry it on with redoubled vigour; mark, I say, the delicacy, the caution, and the unexampled forbearance, of Britain, in her endeavours to secure herself with as little injury as possible to Spain. That we did not wish to go to war with Spain in the first instance is very evident, from the mildness and patience with which we overlooked her numerous aggressions; that we still wished to avoid it, if practicable, in the present instance, is as evident, from the gentleness with which we inflicted corrective admonition. When we found that Spain strove to perplex us by evading our enquiries, and that she refused all direct explanation respecting her connexion with France, still anxious to spare her, and to avoid measures of actual hostility, orders were dispatched to our squadrons, cruizing off Ferrol and Cadiz, to prevent any Spanish ships of war from leaving their ports; to intercept any

treasure ships which might fall in their way; and to detain them till certain doubtful points were cleared up; but not to detain any other description of Spanish homeward-bound ships of war, and by no means to molest the Spanish trade.* This surely could only be intended as a measure of precaution, as it was very far within the limits of what we might, not only with justice, but with advantage and security, have enforced.

What then is the reason of all the clamour and outcry which have been raised against this measure? Is it because it has been too severe, or too lenient? Let us go a little way back, and see what has been the sentiments of politicians, and the sense of this nation, in parallel cases, in other times? Did not the late Lord Chatham, that eminent and patriotic statesman, throw up his seat in the cabinet on being opposed in a question something similar, but of infinitely more intricacy and delicacy than this? Was not Lord North universally condemned, and even threatened with impeachment, for his culpable neglect in allowing the French, Dutch, and Spaniards, whilst making pacific professions, to carry on their armaments without remonstrance, and to sail without

* See No. 28 of the papers presented to Parliament on the 4th of January.

explanation?

explanation? Was not Mr. Addington highly blamed, by a powerful party of the present day, for not declaring war at once with Spain, the moment that we were at war with France, knowing the connexion which subsisted between the two countries, the absolute dependence, since the year 1795, of Spain on France, and the consequence which, sooner or later, would be the inevitable result? Have not the Spaniards themselves, within the last four-and-twenty years, on questions of an hundred times less provocation, importance, and embarrassment, furnished two cases directly in point, in the disputes which arose relative to the Falkland Islands and Nootka Sound? The grounds are, in fact, incontrovertible as to *right*. The exercise of that right, therefore, became a simple question of discretion and expediency. The government, after what had passed, had full liberty to proceed to any extremities of legitimate war, and what fell short of that exercise of power was matter of condescension, compassion, and forbearance, on their part.

Using thus their discretion, the orders respecting the detention of the register ships were transmitted to our squadrons on the Spanish coast. The four frigates which were cruizing off Cadiz fell in, on the 5th of October, a few leagues from Cape St. Mary, with four ships that came under the

the denomination described. The captains of course did their duty, but desirous of complying with their instructions with all possible lenity, having acquainted the Spanish commanders with their object, they used every argument which they could suggest to induce them quietly to submit. They told them that the two countries were not at war; that the matters in dispute might yet be accommodated; that their orders were only a measure of precaution; and endeavoured to impress them with a conviction of the desperate folly of contending with so superior a force. This conversation lasted for nearly an hour before a single gun was fired, but to no purpose. The Spaniards, when they found that they could not evade the blow, thought that their honour required that they should not surrender without defence. One cannot find fault with their feelings. Our own officers would have acted in the same manner, and had it not been for the lamentable accident which happened to the Mercedes, the mischief done, compared with the object at stake, would not have been considerable. But does the blowing up of the Mercedes in the least affect the merits of the case? It was a most unfortunate event, which we sincerely deplore, but which arose entirely from the carelessness and confusion

confusion which prevailed among her own crew.* It was a disaster that could not have been foreseen, and that certainly could never have been intended. Are we then to be reproached with this fatal and melancholy catastrophe? It can only be regarded as one of those contingencies in human affairs, which are a subject of grief, but not of condemnation, and on account of which no more blame or responsibility attaches to us than if it had never happened. Every exertion was made by our boats to save the lives of the survivors, and every relief that could be provided, under such afflicting circumstances, was most cheerfully and humanely administered.

It is an accident, however, which has been made a handle of, both by the Spanish government, and by the enemies of our own government, with as much virulence and indecency as if the instructions forwarded to our commanders had specifically required the explosion, and we were consequently answerable for the event. But surely nothing can be more unjust or more absurd than these allegations. As well might the ministers be arraigned for any other possible misfortune which may arise in the execution of general or-

* Such was the confusion on board some of the Spanish ships, that, during the action, they fired several broadsides without shotting their guns.

ders.

ders. This measure was decided on, as the least harsh. Merchant ships, and even ships of war, were still allowed to pass, and these treasure ships, which belonged to the Spanish government, were only detained as a security for the conduct of Spain, under very suspicious appearances: at a time too when, without scruple, we might have made them legal captures, and have extended the same severity to every other description of Spanish property.

Had the court of Spain explained its proceedings to our satisfaction, these ships would have been immediately restored, with every possible compensation for the injury which they had sustained; and if they have been finally forfeited in consequence of their own foolish perverseness, or lamentable imbecillity, the fault is theirs, not ours. We stand completely exonerated.* The lot of Spain is indeed deplorable. Opposed by an open, but honourable, foe, and in league with a secret, but still more formidable, one; assailed by pestilence, famine, and rebellion; commencing a war with a revenue not adequate to the exigencies of her internal government in peaceable times; her

* Every point of this question has, at length, been most amply discussed in both houses of Parliament, and all the arguments which have been adduced on either side have tended to confirm the opinion which I had originally formed.

doom

doom seems fast approaching; and unless the magnanimous exertions of a still warlike and high-minded, but oppressed and impoverished people, can curb domestic treachery and intrigue, shake off the shackles of perfidious friendship, and conciliate the esteem and goodwill of that power which has still the capacity and the inclination to afford her assistance, her fate is sealed, and her monarchy obliterated. Would that I could conjure up that nice perception of honour, that noble sense of national pride, that lofty spirit of independence, which has lately been so insidiously invoked!* Would that the heroic mind of her old hereditary nobility could be, at this exigent moment, revived; that mind which, in ancient and better times, impregnated a whole nation, and whose impulse gave birth to those mighty efforts which rescued Europe from a second barbarian subjugation, and secured the triumph of the cross over the religion of Mahomet. How usefully, how honourably, might this feeling be now employed. The modern Saracens are more fatal than those of old, and the religion, the civil constitution, and the political freedom of the community are threatened with a more desolating yoke. Should this latent spirit rekindle, and urge on the nobles to an assumption of those

* See the Prince of Peace's manifesto.

virtues which formerly so strongly characterised them, one of their first acts would be to drive from the councils of their king an insolent upstart, who is universally detested and despised, whose similar unlooked-for elevation stamps him the venal tool of Bonaparte, and who is laying them prostrate before their bitterest enemy.

A war with Spain is almost always a popular war, particularly with our navy, as little is to be apprehended from her exertions, and a rich harvest is generally to be secured in prizes. In this view, therefore, it will give additional vigour to our vigilance and enterprise.

About the conduct of the war, various opinions will no doubt be entertained. As an object of attack the Spanish possessions in South America seem to offer an alluring bait. The expulsion of the Spaniards from that continent might no doubt be easily effected. Their military force is small. The remembrance of past, and the pressure of present wrongs, are rankling in the breasts of the natives; and the recorded misfortunes of Montezuma and Atahualpa are blended with the tortures of an inquisitorial government. Still, with all these aids, we should, I think, act more prudently in leaving them to the natural course of separation, which, without our interference, will, in all probability, sooner or later, take place between

tween them and the mother country. We should pursue a wiser plan, by imitating the example of Drake, Anson, Vernon, Pococke, and Rodney, and confining our hostile designs in those quarters to occasional attacks on the Havannah, Vera Cruz, and Carthagena, on their general commerce, and to the interruption of the register ships on their voyage home. Any attempt to dispossess the Spaniards of their American empire, with the view of retaining a permanent possession, would certainly, in some respects, be a hazardous, and in others, might prove a very pernicious, measure. We should, indisputably, endeavour to prevent it from falling under the domination of France;*

* One of the plans which France had evidently most at heart, was to revive her own trade by aiming a fatal blow at the commercial greatness of Britain. Her design was to exclude us from every European market, and to rule over every continental port, from the shores of the Baltic and of the German Sea to those of the Mediterranean. To this end, she exerted her authority over Holland, Italy, and Switzerland, and her influence over every other part of Europe. In America, her views were not less extensive, and the fleets and troops which she so hastily dispatched from her principal harbours to the West Indies, immediately after the signature of the preliminaries of the treaty of Amiens, were intended to insure their execution. Having obliged the Portuguese to cede a district of Guyana extending along the banks of the Amazons, and the Spaniards to deliver up Louisiana, which is bounded by the Mississippi, she expected to acquire the command of these two immense rivers. Had she

 succeeded,

but of this there now is little risk. The cession of Louisiana has powerfully conduced to secure the mines of Potosi and Peru from French cupidity. In the hands of Spain they are become, as far as their invigorating powers are concerned, a harmless possession, administering to her exigencies without rendering her strength formidable. Our own colonies are also sufficiently extensive, and the invasion of these settlements might involve us in fatal disputes with the United States, whose jealousies would naturally be excited by seeing an active, powerful, and enterprising people established in the vicinity of their southern frontier.

I shall now take a cursory view of our domestic history, with which I shall conclude this work.

In spite of this protracted war, for the few months of anxious repose which intervened are hardly to be taken into account, this country may still be considered in a flourishing condition. Convinced as we are of the absolute necessity of

succeeded, she would have been enabled, as she thought fit, to annoy the trade of the English, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the Americans; to interrupt all commercial communication amongst these several powers; and to render the productions of America and the West Indies, in great measure, dependent on France. The rebellion in St. Domingo, and the renewal of war with this country, totally frustrated these splendid projects.

patience

patience and vigour, we contemplate our situation with those generous feelings which determine us to sacrifice every seemingly present advantage, in defence of lasting and more important future benefits. We feel that we are fighting for our independence, and our existence as a nation. Those inconveniences, therefore, which are the obvious and unavoidable result of this important struggle, are cheerfully submitted to; and the patriotism of the people keeps pace with the necessities of the times. Some, however, there are, who are bent on complaint, and whose murmurs, with what motives it is not difficult to divine, are industriously circulated through the land. Increasing exigencies with exhausted resources, the usual bugbears to terrify weak minds, are tricked out in every shape, and rendered more ludicrous by the glaring patchwork which envelopes them. But those who dismiss such counterfeit appearances, the creation of perverted or diseased fancies, and disdain to be misled by the sweeping reports of the disaffected, the falsehoods of the factious, or the misrepresentations of the designing, may still contemplate the real vigour and resources of their country with confidence and consolation.

It is, no doubt, the nature of war to increase the expenditure of the government, and to divert many of the usual sources of prosperity and wealth into

into unprofitable channels. This is an evil inseparable from the constitution of hostile preparations. But when we are arguing this weighty question, we must investigate it in all its bearings, future as well as present, incidental as well as inherent. We must balance the positive and relative incumbrances against the probable and contingent evils.

If war were a mere matter of choice, the world would, in all likelihood, remain at eternal peace. But as it arises out of the passions and conflicting interests of mankind, and is frequently occasioned by the pride and ambition, or by the arbitrary or insidious designs of others, we must consider, whether it be better to surrender at once, or, by incurring temporary penalties and inconveniences, to secure permanent and inestimable blessings. This then is our precise predicament. We wish for peace; but, unless we can enjoy it with honour and security, we prefer war. Nor is it requisite to appeal to the heated imaginations of mankind to procure this suffrage. It is a question of sober reason and common sense, which at once comes home to the heart of every honest man, and to which, as soon as the proposition is propounded, he assents.

Being thus necessarily engaged in war, not for conquest but for preservation; not for ambition but

but for honour; our motives are as just as our cause is sanctified. We have been absolutely forced into this unfortunate state by a profligate and perfidious foe, who, to gratify inordinate ambition, revenge, and other base passions, has long been seeking to reduce us to a level with the powers that he has already enchained. We must, therefore, patiently endure what we cannot avert; and, attributing all our sufferings to him, we must strive to devise means, which, by reducing his power, will humble his pretensions, and eventually lead to his confusion and ruin. And in this contest we must not deceive ourselves. We must not expect that it will be of short duration. We must bear in mind that we have to wrestle with no common enemy; but with one who has raised himself, by the blackest crimes and the basest subterfuges, to the place which he has usurped, and which he can only hope to preserve by a repetition of the same flagitious acts. It has, nevertheless, hitherto been most satisfactorily proved, notwithstanding his threats, his inclinations, and his means, that to attack us is beyond the temerity of his daring, or the boundaries of his power.

If, therefore, it be his design to stand merely on the defensive, and to convert the war into a war of finance, so that it is to be finally decided by the stoutest purse, it is at least fair to conjecture, that

that we, who are blessed with the most abundant resources, shall be able to hold out the longest.

I have already shewn, that the foreign trade of France is totally at a stand; that several of those rich and flourishing colonies, which filled with their produce many hundred sail of ships, are irrecoverably lost; and that the interior trade and manufactures, which formerly afforded another very material branch of revenue, are in a most miserable and mutilated state. With these serious defalcations, the disbursements must be increased in a tenfold proportion. The vast establishments which are kept on foot; the excessive profusion and prodigality which pervade every department; the system which is invariably adopted by men who fill the highest offices, of amassing enormous wealth by peculating on the public; the largesses distributed to the troops, who are kept together by these wasteful indulgences, and not by a sense of discipline, duty, or affection; and the lavish luxury of a mushroom court, which is aiming to bribe the people to allegiance by the costly tinsel of popular shows: all these extravagances absorb the resources of a state.

When such statements are made, it is naturally asked—are they true? It is naturally enquired, how things can go on at all, which are conducted on such principles, and which must be radically tending

tending to their own ruin? But that such is the case there can be no doubt. The French have hitherto escaped their own destruction by the destruction of others. If we look at the impoverished and desolate condition of some of the most fertile and flourishing regions of the continent, the mystery is unravelled. A man, with a rental of five thousand a year, can contrive to spend ten thousand a year for fourteen years to come. So it has been with spendthrift France: interest and principal have been consumed. When this stock was exhausted, the wealth of individuals was appropriated to the same use which she had before made of the wealth of the nation; and, when this fund failed, she had recourse to the same arbitrary measures in dependent and foreign states. Plunder, by loans, by forced contributions, and by more violent robbery, has been extorted from all ranks, in all proportions, and in all ways. France herself, and every country within her destroying grasp, have been drained of their wealth and their produce in aid of her boundless profusion. The state purveyors sweep indiscriminately into their treasuries every thing that the prying eye of examination can detect, or the gross voracity of appetite devour; and when affairs can no longer go on even in this mode, a bankruptcy is declared; the old score is wiped

off; a new set of books is purchased; and the accounts are begun anew. The capital of Holland, within the last twelve years, has been completely exhausted, and, wherever the French have been masters, the same outrageous exaction has been practised. The point of the bayonet, which is on all occasions presented, subdues the feeble voice of complaint, and fortunate is the trembling suppliant who, having murmured, escapes with life. But this system of terror and injustice, however it may stifle the voice, cannot be persisted in, without making that kind of deep and durable impression on the feelings of the sufferers, which is sufficient to shake, and, in due time, to subvert, the most formidable despotism that successful tyranny ever established. This period, which has already been far too long postponed, may be still deferred; but that it will arrive the moment there is a well-grounded hope of success, I am firmly convinced. The hand may be inactive, the tongue may be mute; but the inherent passions of mankind must continue to operate, and vengeance is only reposing now to be more terrible hereafter.

Whilst, however, the despot of France preserves his ill-gotten power by such consistent means, how satisfactory is it to reflect, that the British government has been able to put forth an

energy,

energy, more than capable of counteracting all his insidious machinations and ambitious projects against this country; and that this important object has been effected without departing from the principles of the constitution, or deviating from any of the regular and usual modes of providing for the exigencies of the state! Our taxes are great, but they are imposed, through the parliament, by the voice of the people; and, happily, the increasing wealth of the community enables us to support them without much distressing inconvenience.

In this country the public spirit and cheerful alacrity of the inhabitants are ten times more productive than all the summary and vexatious procedures to which despotism can resort. Two exuberant springs, which have totally failed in France, have united to produce these favourable dispositions in the British people, and to furnish these inexhaustible resources to the British government. A free people identify themselves with the constitution of which they are an essential and vital part. They are anxious to support those laws from which their happiness, their prosperity, their freedom, and their strength, principally flow. The good faith with which the government acquits itself of its engagements, also creates an unbounded confidence with monied men; and

whilst it proves the unshaken stability of our means, furnishes a rapid provision to our wants. The punctuality with which the dividends on the national debt are paid; the prosperous state of that debt from the increasing operation of the sinking fund; the high price of the stocks; and the flourishing condition of our manufactures and commerce; these all combine most powerfully to make us look at our finances without the slightest feeling of dismay.

Notwithstanding all the efforts, all the arts, and all the malignity of our enemy, who has been long buoyed up with the expectation that our resources would fail, the duration of the contest, instead of augmenting our fears, has only confirmed our opinion of their security. Particular branches of commerce, particular branches of manufacture, have, no doubt, met with interruption. We must not, however, in any national computation, look to particulars, but to the sum total. Certain descriptions of individuals may suffer from the wisest political institutions, but that surely can be no argument against such establishments. With an enlightened government, the convenience and prosperity of the great body of the nation must be the main object of solicitude, and to that object every other consideration ought to yield. We must, therefore, in commerce,

merce, as well as in every thing else, be guided by the aggregate amount; and, in this research, if we consult the books at the custom-house and the excise-office, we shall have no reason for lamentation.* Fluctuations will arise in the most tranquil times: these will be increased by a state of hostility; but, notwithstanding the clamours of particular people, there can be no possible doubt that the trade of this country has been considerably extended by the strange circumstances of this extraordinary war; and for this evident reason.—France and Holland, two of the leading commercial states of Europe, and our principal rivals, having been totally excluded from this profitable sphere of action, those immense concerns, which were formerly transacted by them, have fallen, in a great measure, into our hands. A considerable portion of this increased trade, we shall, no doubt, gradually lose, whenever Europe shall be fortunately re-established on its antient equilibrium. We shall,

* What can be a stronger proof of this, than those stupendous works which have been undertaken by the commercial members of the community, for the reception of their shipping from the different quarters of the globe? On the London Docks alone, upwards of 1,500,000l. has been already expended. Individuals frequently accomplish in this country, what governments are unable to effect in others.

however,

however, in that case, gain advantages in another way, of ten times more importance than any which can accrue from the profits of this accidental commerce; because we shall then pursue what naturally belongs to our industry, our power, and our wealth, in the bosom of peace. Thus, I am not attempting to counterbalance the advantages derived from war by those derived from peace, which, in every point of view, are of infinitely more value; I am only aiming to shew, how fortunate it is for us that, whilst we are involved in hostilities, which no prudence could have avoided, we should be furnished with such additional resources to enable us to carry them on.

Bonaparte may fulminate his anathemas; he may decree restraints, and interdict all commercial community with Great Britain and her dependencies; but I am satisfied that this short-sighted policy will recoil upon himself. It is decidedly an advantage to a country, that those commodities, which are become essential to its wants, should be supplied from that source at which they can be procured on the most favourable terms. British goods have not been received at the foreign markets of Europe from compulsion or from favour, but from interest. This preference has been occasioned by the expertness in

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the workmanship, and the cheapness of the price, in which other nations have been but faint competitors. If they were to attempt to manufacture the same articles themselves, not only would the quality be ten times worse, but the price would be ten times dearer to the consumer. It would resemble a person, who, disdaining to profit by the advantages which result from the division of labour, should resolve to make every thing which he required, through all its stages, with his own hands. It is, therefore, evident that the wealth and labour of the country so disposed would be unprofitably employed, in the exact proportion of the difference in quality and price. The balance would be a clear loss. There are, indeed, so many channels open, for the application of human industry, invention, and speculation, that those pursuits which are most congenial to the natural inclinations or prejudices of the people, are almost always most beneficial to the state. Our superiority has been the growth of ages, and is to be attributed to a diffusive combination of circumstances, among which, our geographical position, our great capitals, our superior industry, our experience, our address, the stability of our merchants, and the national honour, are the most prominent. It may in time be contested, or supplanted, by the exertions of other states. But

things

things of this nature can never be forced with advantage: they must be allowed to take their course. British goods, therefore, in spite of the ordinances of Bonaparte, will continue to find their way to the great marts of Europe; and what contraband is unable to effect, will be covered by other less direct arts, at which the government, however vigilant and peremptory it may pretend to be, will, in the end, be compelled to connive. It is thus evidently more for his interest to allow the receipt of the regular duties, which, by a fair and open trade, would flow into his treasury, than to provide for his wants by arming the rapacious hand of violence, or, by vexatious regulations, to induce clandestine modes of supply, by which the revenue is injured, and the prosperity of the community most essentially deteriorated.*

* The finances of a state can, indeed, never thrive, except by a just and equal distribution of taxes, bearing on all classes of society, according to their ability, and fed by the exuberant and never-failing sources of internal industry, and foreign and colonial trade. Taxation naturally divides itself into three principal branches; viz. land, commerce and manufactures, and capital; and the great art of managing this essential object of domestic economy, consists in discovering what each can well support, and fairly apportioning the one to the other. If either be partially burdened, the effect will, in the end, be similar, for they are so inseparably connected, that whichever is the sufferer,

But although the means of this country be so abundant, it is to be hoped that some benefit will accrue from past experience; and that its ample resources will be managed with that judicious frugality, which can alone remove all doubt of their duration, and make the people satisfied under their increasing burdens. I believe that great and beneficial reforms are still to be made in many of the chief departments of the state, and, little as I approved of Lord St. Vincent's general administration, whilst he presided at the Admiralty, I think that he has deserved well of his

sufferer, the mischief will infallibly extend to the remaining two. Excessive imposts increasing the price whilst they confine the means of improvement, the intrinsic value of the material consequently diminishes; with the value the consumption, and with the consumption the produce. These disadvantages destroying that interest, which before was the animating spring of exertion, it naturally declines, and with it all spirit of experiment languishes, and all desire of enterprise becomes extinct. A system of arbitrary injustice may answer for a short time, but it must inevitably be destructive of every solid principle of national wealth; for unless the interest of individuals be rendered coincident with that of the community, it is ridiculous to expect from them those efforts which can alone effectually administer to public wants. To the different application of these principles, and the opposite modes of raising the revenue in France and in Great Britain, are to be chiefly ascribed the confusion and difficulty which prevail in the one, and the order and facility which distinguish the other.

country (although the mode might have been more conciliating) for that spirit of investigation into enormous abuses which he introduced, and which, I hope, with an impartial and moderate spirit, will be faithfully persevered in.

The navy of Britain is certainly on a proud footing, and is fast recovering from the effects of those unwise and parsimonious regulations, which were adopted by the late board of Admiralty, and which, had they been persisted in, would have gone, even by this time, very far towards its ruin. But the error has been perceived, and has luckily been abandoned, before it was too late. Our dock-yards are again replenished, and we shall at least have some fresh ships to supply the place of those already in commission, as they meet with accidents, or, by age, are rendered unfit for service.* In

* It appears from the report made to the Admiralty in 1793, that the growth of timber has been very much neglected, and that it is failing fast in this country. This is to be highly lamented, as no part of the globe produces finer timber for the construction of ships of war. I have been informed, that fifty acres of land at forty trees an acre, and two loads of timber from each tree, are necessary to build a seventy-four. At this rate, to build our present navy, which consists of about 600,000 tons of shipping, would require near 20,000 acres of wood of from 100 to 140 years growth. There was, I think, formerly a regulation in France, obliging every person who cut down a full-grown tree, to plant three. This regulation might,

such a country as this, which owes so much to its naval superiority, other sacrifices must be subordinate. It never can answer suddenly to recede from the liberal scale on which this noble establishment has been long managed. We should find our artificers flocking to foreign parts for employment; the trade in naval stores would get into other hands: and, in the course of years, navies more numerous and better appointed than our own, would be springing up. For these cogent and palpable reasons, we should never suffer ourselves to relax in those measures which are calculated to insure the prosperity of this great national bulwark. We must not, presuming on the low state to which the naval force of other countries is reduced, allow our own to decay: for it is to the peculiar attention

might, with modifications, be beneficially pursued in some particular districts of this country. It might perhaps be still better to set apart a fund for the purchase of land, adapted to the cultivation of timber, and reserved solely for that purpose. The only mode, indeed, of securing a certain and regular supply, is to make it a national concern, for although woods, when in perfection, yield considerable profits, yet the growth is so slow, and the advantage so distant, that individuals, who, by employing their money in the cultivation of cattle and grain, can insure an immediate return, cannot generally be expected to speculate in plantations. This very important object cannot be too soon attended to.

which has been bestowed on it, and the magnificent plan on which it has been conducted, that its present grandeur is to be entirely ascribed. It has extended our dominion and our fame; and it is the pride and security which we repose in its power, that have induced us to contribute so cheerfully to its support. The instant the cultivation of it is neglected, it will begin to wither, and our feelings, subsiding with the motives which feed them, may not be so easily revived. Our stock of ships, and stock of stores, must, therefore, be unremittingly kept up; for it is only by preserving our navy where it is, that we can hope to retain that decisive pre-eminence which places in our hands the destinies of half the globe.

With one hundred and eighty ships of the line; with frigates and smaller vessels in proportion; with 120,000 sailors distinguished no less for their gallantry than their skill, and commanded by officers every way worthy of such a command; all that can be accomplished by men with such a formidable force at their disposal, may be confidently expected. There is no enterprise however daring, no service however tedious, no exploit however hazardous, that is not embarked in with alacrity, by the courage, the patience, and the activity, of these intrepid guardians of their

their country. In every climate, in every zone, the British flag is triumphant; in every conflict it is victorious; in almost every undertaking it is successful. Even our privateers and merchantmen seem to be emulating, in deeds of valour and exertion, our ships of war, and to feel all the pride which attaches to the name of a British sailor. Whilst, however, I bestow this praise, and feel this confidence, I must submit to the consideration of more competent judges, a point of some importance, and which appears to me to have been very imprudently conceded.

Thinking as I do, that the glory and power of this great country, and its prosperity in every shape, are intimately blended with the decided superiority of its marine, I am clearly of opinion, that we cannot be too jealous of teaching other maritime states to rival us in this respect. Our uncontested pre-eminence has arisen out of a long series of practical regulations, which have taken advantage of the instinctive propensities of the people. Our insular situation, and our vast colonial possessions in remote quarters of the globe, have naturally created a predilection for nautical and commercial concerns; and the experience, which has been thus acquired, has been directed and improved by education. The duties which are performed in a British ship of war;

war; the high state of discipline and order which prevails; the punctuality, precision, and expertness, with which every thing is conducted; have given a peculiar character to British sailors, and, combined with natural aptitude, have rendered them, what they indisputably are, superior to any sailors that ever existed.

On these principles I object most decidedly to that permission which, about eighteen months ago, was granted to Russia to distribute three hundred boys, who had been selected and previously prepared by the government of that empire, in the quality of midshipmen, on board the British fleets. These boys have been admitted, in my opinion most injudiciously, to serve in our navy, at the period of life at which our own midshipmen usually begin their career; and having been picked out of numbers on account of their superior intelligence and sprightliness, it is very evident that they are likely to derive every advantage from their apprenticeship, which could be hoped for from the same number of British boys so chosen. They must inevitably be familiarised with the whole ground-work and system of naval tactics as they are practised in the British navy. This science and skill they will carry with them into their own country, where they will probably, in the course of years, fill important stations,

stations, and lay the foundation of a Russian navy which, at some future period, may rival ours. The period when this may happen is no doubt remote; yet this is the surest mode of lessening that distance of time, and I think posterity will owe little thanks to that foresight or prudence which has so impolitically conceded, and which, carried to a greater extent, may be productive of very serious mischief. Having however suffered them to enter, this is certainly not the moment to dismiss them; but I cannot help blaming that kind of remissness which could be induced to consent to such a proposal, and I sincerely hope that the number may, on no account, be augmented. There are also a few regulations which might, I think, be attended with beneficial effects, and which, as I am on the subject, I shall take the liberty of suggesting.

In every king's ship, at least of, and above, the rate of a frigate, there should certainly be a schoolmaster to keep the youngsters a given portion of the day at study; to instruct them in the elements of navigation and astronomy; and to watch over their conduct and assiduity in every thing which concerns naval science and discipline. This province, with an additional salary, might be allotted to the masters, who are entitled to more encouragement than they receive. According to the present

present rules of the navy, they are precluded from all chance of promotion, which not only operates as a strong drawback on exertion, but excludes from this branch of the service many of those who are best qualified to discharge its duties. Hence it frequently occurs, that these men who should be, both practically and theoretically, persons of the greatest knowledge and experience, are very deficient in such acquirements; and, when an intricate case arises, they are puzzled how to act. If these obstacles were removed, the stipend augmented, and the fair chance of preferment held out, this very important post would, no doubt, be more ably filled.

The pay of the surgeons and surgeons' mates should also be increased,* so as to induce men of eminent scientific research, and great practical skill, to engage themselves. Many of this description there certainly are; but these, it must be owned, are not sufficiently rewarded, and those who are without such requisites, the sooner they are dismissed the better. Men who gallantly expose their lives in the service of the state are entitled to every care and comfort which money can provide. The salary of this indispensable ap-

* I understand that an order has been lately given to this effect.

pointment

pointment should therefore be ample, and no one should be suffered to obtain it without having received a regular education, and having undergone a strict examination.*

To these alterations another of great utility might be added; which is, that each ship should, at the expence of government, be furnished with every necessary nautical instrument, and a complete set of charts. This last desideratum is an object of considerable importance, as, by the present regulations, the captain being obliged to purchase his own charts, a ship, in general, is only provided with those which are necessary for the particular station on which she happens to be employed. Very few English charts are laid down with accuracy, so that he is obliged to have recourse to foreign ones, which are purchased at a considerable expence, and which, although procured for the necessary service of his country, if landed in England, are liable to a heavy duty. He, therefore, contrives to manage with as few as he can. But should any sealed orders arrive (a

* When, indeed, we consider that the pay, allowed to the officers of a king's ship, has received no addition for above one hundred years, and the vast alteration which, in that period of time, has taken place in the value of money, and the purchase of the necessaries of life, it would be no more than an act of justice in the legislature, to grant a general advance.

case continually occurring) which are to be opened in a certain latitude, it is not unlikely, that he should be sent unawares to a place which he never before visited, and with which no one in the ship has the slightest acquaintance. He is thus reduced to the necessity of consulting some general work, where coasts, if they be noticed at all, are laid down with the greatest slovenliness, by which he is exposed to serious inconvenience and risk. How much wiser would it be, and how much more worthy of the grandeur of our naval establishment, if proper charts, according to regular and well-authenticated surveys, were collected and published under the auspices of government —according to our own surveys when they could be relied on, and according to those of other countries when they were ascertained to be more accurate. Of these, every ship of war, liable to be sent on distant expeditions, should be provided with a complete set, for which the captain might be made responsible. In this office might be also treasured up every kind of information, concerning surveys of coasts and harbours, plans of fortifications, and various other subjects, of which those that it was not deemed necessary to bind up with the general Atlas, might be always in readiness, so as to be forwarded with the orders for any secret expedition: a plan which, if properly methodised,

methodised, would be attended with very evident and material advantage.

There is another appointment which, I must confess, I should rejoice to see take place, which is that of a chaplain to every ship above the rate of a sloop. Great as the levity and the dissipation of the age are, it is universally acknowledged that we are totally dependent on the Supreme Being. To him we are taught, by our holy religion, on all occasions, to address ourselves, in gladness as well as in sorrow, in prosperity as well as in adversity. And if prayers and supplications to the Deity be of importance on shore, it is folly to imagine them to be divested of any of that importance at sea, when the dangers to which men are exposed are so much multiplied, and the service on which they are employed involves the fate of their country. It were, therefore, much to be wished, that divine service were regularly and solemnly performed every Sunday morning (unless prevented by urgent duty) by an ordained priest. Being entirely at the mercy of the great Author of Nature, both as individuals and a nation, it surely behoves us, in every point of view, whether as an example, or an act of more immediate concern, to habituate ourselves to express our gratitude for those signal favours which, in his bounty, he has conferred, and to

implore, with fervour and humility, his continued protection. The additional expence of these various arrangements would be trifling; they would make a provision for many worthy and useful members of society; and the country might be expected to reap from them very essential benefits.

Respecting the distribution and force of our ships, I shall also take the liberty of offering a few remarks.

The system of blockading our enemy's ports, although it has been so pertinaciously persisted in, does not seem to meet with the approbation of the most intelligent naval officers. At the first breaking out of a war, it may be expedient: but when the country is once in a state of preparation, it is surely more to our advantage that the enemy should shew himself. Nor, indeed, has our perseverance, in this respect, been attended with any benefit, at all answerable to the exorbitant expence which it occasions, and to the destructive wear and tear, and frequent accidents which are incurred. But it seems to be, in some measure, the destiny of official orders to act in extremes; and, as a punishment for Lord Bridport's inactivity, Admiral Cornwallis is kept continually at sea. Now it must strike every reasonable man, that a medium between these two opposite

opposite modes is the safest and the best. If it were meant as an experiment to shew the French what British sailors could do, and to prove to them, that, in despite of the elements, we could confine them to their ports throughout the year, that experiment has been fully made, and that proof fully given. But when we find that we are exposed to perpetual hazards, and to gales of wind, which, from the skill and experience of our sailors, we ride out, but which no skill or experience can prevent from doing very serious damage, and that no particular object is gained by it, it would be difficult to discover on what principles of wisdom it should be persevered in. Would it not be much more judicious, to keep a few frigates and lighter vessels cruizing off Brest, and the other principal French harbours, as squadrons of observation, whilst our Channel fleet was lying at anchor at some convenient place of rendezvous; not, however, inactive; but, as the weather and season favoured them, putting to sea, and occasionally shewing themselves before the enemy's ports? Every good purpose during the tempestuous months of the year might be thus answered, and those distressing accidents, by which our finest ships are so often crippled, might be, in a great measure, avoided. Those fruitless attacks on the Boulogne flotilla it would surely also

also be much wiser totally to abandon. It has been fully proved, that it is not in our power, by any common means, to do it any effectual mischief, as long as it continues in harbour, or lies under the protection of the land batteries. Why then expose our men by attempting what it is beyond the faculties of men to succeed in? On these occasions we generally lose those who are most valuable to the service.

Numerous as our ships of war are, there is one description of vessels in which we are deficient, and which yet might be, frequently, most advantageously employed. I mean gun-boats. On our own coast they would be very convenient, whether as weapons of defence or attack; and, at many of our military posts, particularly at Gibraltar, they might be most usefully disposed of. In calm weather, by coming to close quarters, and getting below the bearing of heavy guns, they may be a dreadful annoyance to large ships. This was several times experienced during the last war, particularly in the gallant action fought by Sir James Saumarez in Algesiras bay; on which occasion, had we also possessed gun-boats, a great part of the mischief which happened might have been easily prevented. In attacking privateers in port, and cutting out merchantmen, these vessels are also always found handy and serviceable.

Our

Our army is every day getting on a more respectable footing; and that military weakness which was occasioned, immediately after the late peace, by a too precipitate dismissal of many of our best troops, is rapidly disappearing. The regular army and the militia have, within the last six months, been considerably strengthened, and the numerous volunteer and fencible regiments have made great progress in expertness and discipline.* Some of the most palpable objections to the original mode of raising men have been removed, and those obvious ones which still remain will, no doubt, undergo a revision. The last bill has, however, I understand, fallen very short of its object; and to create at once a regular efficient force, it will probably be deemed necessary to reduce the militia, and, by a small bounty, endeavour to induce the supernumeraries to enter into the regiments of the line. Limited periods of service would also, I am convinced, be a powerful incentive to enlist; and the contract might be

* It appears that the regular force of this empire, including guards and garrisons, amounts to 148,980; the embodied militia and fencible infantry to 103,328; the foreign corps to 17,386; the forces in India to 20,145; and in our plantations to 46,952, and our volunteers to 325,000 effective men, 240,000 of whom have been inspected and reported fit for service; making altogether a military force of 656,791 men. Our sailors and marines amount to 120,000 more.

so managed, that few men, worth preserving, would be lost to the state. If, for example, a certain bounty were offered sufficient to dispose a man to enter for the term of seven or ten years, at the expiration of two, those men whose engagement you might wish to prolong beyond the specified period, might be persuaded, for a trifling consideration, to extend it to the original term. By this mode a vast sum of money would be saved to the state; the soldiers would be more attached to the service; and the army would consist of none but effective men. A few establishments, similar to that at Chelsea, by which boys, if so disposed, are brought up to the military profession, would enable the government, in some degree, to draw from a fund without impoverishing the population; and would afford an asylum to many who are bred up to a life of infamy, and who, instead of committing depredations on the public, would contribute to its protection and support.

From the above statements it appears, that the situation of this country is, on the whole, highly prosperous; and that its prosperity is not derived from any factitious sources, but from solid, inherent, and permanent causes. Commerce, which conduces more than any other pursuit to the wealth, the happiness, and the industry, of a people, has only been made subordinate to our naval greatness,

greatness, by which the strength, necessary for the preservation of those advantages, is provided.* Interest is rendered subservient to independence, wealth to glory. This seems to be the line of policy which is best calculated to perpetuate our grandeur, and it is likely to be adhered to, as it springs out of our national genius and character. The superiority of the Carthaginians as a commercial people, enabled them to contend so long against the Romans; the superiority of the Greeks as a naval people, enabled them to triumph over the Persians. In Great Britain both these advantages are most happily blended. The martial talents of her inhabitants have not been impaired by their commercial success. If the question were, which of the two should perish, valour would reign decidedly paramount. But they have been made instrumental to each other. What the one ac-

* Our navigation act, which has been, at different times, so bitterly inveighed against, although it may have laid the foundation of our naval greatness, was not instrumental in extending our commerce, on which it even operated as a restraint. Nor did any of the commercial states of Europe suffer from it except the Dutch, who were, at that time, in possession of almost the whole of the carrying trade, which to them was a very lucrative branch. Being however a law entirely of internal regulation, in whichever way it may have operated, no one has a right to complain.

 quires,

quires, the other protects; what this defends, that rewards. It is the path of industry leading to the temple of glory: it is bravery securing the benefits which riches provide.

But I have always, under the most trying circumstances of this country (and very trying of late years have they been), reposed an unbounded confidence in its energies, in its resources, and, above all, in its patriotism. A people who have such objects to contend for as are entrusted to our charge, and who also know how to appreciate them, is not to be subdued. I have, therefore, always treated the idea of invasion, that is to say, of its ultimate consequences, as I treat it now, with sovereign contempt. I have always been firmly persuaded, that Bonaparte, notwithstanding all his boisterous declarations, will not personally hazard the attempt. The spirit of the nation first deterred him; its preparations must confirm that caution. He has also himself tried the temper of our swords, and has discovered that they are superior to those either of Toledo or Damascus.

With all this security, I should not, however, counsel an expedition which would require the long absence of any large body of troops as a succour to a foreign state. On these grounds I should strongly object to a military expedition against

against the Spanish possessions in America: and although it be positively insisted on by many, that a considerable army is immediately to be embarked for the defence of Portugal, I perceive so many powerful reasons for hesitation, that I cannot bring myself to think, that such a measure will be adopted, or, if adopted, that it will be wise, and for the following reasons.

In the first place, a deduction of 20 or 30,000 men from our regular army (and we could hardly think of sending fewer) would very materially weaken the national force; and, although the country might be still safe from invasion, the inconveniences attending such a diminution would, I fear, much more than counterbalance any benefits which we could rationally expect to reap. If, indeed, we were morally certain, that the Portuguese, being driven to a state of absolute despair, were resolutely bent on employing every means in defence of their independence; if we were certain that Prussia, with 20 or 30,000 men, would, at the same time, make a descent on Holland; that Russia and Sweden would pour a numerous army into Hanover and Brabant; and that Austria would invade Italy and Switzerland: we might then, amidst the distractions which these various attacks would occasion to France, with certain effect, contribute our aid to Portugal.

But whilst all, or most of these points remain problematical, I cannot perceive a probability of success.* Let us not, therefore, run the risk of embarrassment, expence, discomfiture, and disgrace, till we have some brighter prospect, and are perfectly sure of the grounds on which we proceed. We had, in the course of the last war, some severe lessons on this score, when, for want of previous intelligence, well connected dispositions, and expected co-operation, we were exposed to misfortunes of a very serious cast.

British troops, led on by British officers, in a truly British cause, against an equal number of any other troops, we have abundance of reason to think, will acquit themselves with honour. This point was never more gloriously exemplified than in the Egyptian campaign, when a more numerous army of picked soldiers, in possession of the country, and inured to the climate, was, in the course of a few months, obliged to surrender to the superior valour and skill of our native legions. But, when their numbers are small compared with their allies

* What happened in 1762 cannot be quoted as a ground of expectation for a similar success now. The power and spirit of France were then very different. She was engaged in great continental difficulties, and she had, for many previous years, been involved in one of the most unsuccessful wars which she ever waged.

or their enemies, which must generally be the case in continental expeditions, the British, who then only act as auxiliaries, cannot be made responsible for the conduct or the success of the main army. If the Portuguese be firmly resolved on their defence, and actuated by a due sense of honour and fame, by patriotism and public spirit as well as by a feeling of interest, they will not be readily subjugated. Let them recollect, that towards the end of the fifteenth century, they were one of the most powerful and prosperous nations of Europe; that the boldness and enterprise of their navigators first pointed out the track to a new world, and secured to themselves a new empire; that, if Philip II. subdued them in 1581, in 1640 they again threw off the Spanish yoke; and that, after a struggle of eight-and-twenty years against the whole strength of the Spanish monarchy, they firmly established the family of Braganza on their throne. The advantages of their discoveries have been lost from a defect in their national character, and their military virtues have long been declining from the vices of their government. The materials of an army are, however, still in the country. The people are robust, patient, sober, active, and brave; and under proper regulations in the appointment and selection of officers, their discipline, which is at present

present totally relaxed, might be restored. When, therefore, the Portuguese shall have made the necessary preparations and exertions for their own defence; when they shall have afforded undoubted proofs of courage and zeal in their own cause; when they shall be resolutely bent on the vindication of their own honour and independence; they may then be entitled to assistance from us. But to send to Portugal a British army, on the mere supposition that she will stand forth a glorious exception to the tame submission of other parts of the continent, would be a dangerous experiment, and would be placing a confidence in her inhabitants which, hitherto, has not been warranted by facts.

The state of parties, even in this country, is not such as one should expect, at a moment which so eminently challenges the action of every disinterested virtue, and all the unanimity and vigour which the distinguished talents of its leading men might with such effect afford. The dilemma to which many of them are at this moment reduced, is a subject on which we cannot dwell with any feeling of satisfaction, much less of exultation. Love of power, and love of place, mingled with disappointed ambition, have lately, in numerous instances, most conspicuously triumphed over all consistency of conduct, all principle of patriotism,

patriotism, and, I fear, I may add, all sense of duty.

Every member of the community is interested in the character of those men who take the lead in public affairs. He feels himself, in some measure, degraded by their dereliction, as it attaints the opinion which he had formed of the public virtue of his country. Being thus intimately concerned in the formation of political parties, when great revolutions occur, he, for the honour of the community of which he is a part, is naturally anxious to reconcile them to the standard of justice and reason. But his efforts, in this instance, as they have unhappily been in innumerable others, are completely ineffectual, for on none of these grounds can we account for late occurrences. How men of such adverse principles and declared views as have long distinguished the old and the new opposition; how men who, through the best part of their lives, have been thwarting each other with all the zeal, and much of the intemperate virulence, of party rage; who, on some occasions, have accused each other of the most unconstitutional intentions, and the most factious proceedings; whose doctrines have been essentially at variance, in foundation and superstructure, in origin and deduction, in argument and practice; who have been diametrically opposite in all important

portant opinions, whether of foreign or domestic policy; who have in no one maxim agreed, in no one sentiment accorded, in no one shade of argument approximated; who have, in every point of contact, been fundamentally and invariably at issue;—how such men should, in one moment, have removed this immeasurable distance, in one moment have levelled these seemingly irreconcileable and insuperable obstructions, and, dismissing even the recollection of all past discordance, should at once have drawn together in one friendly knot; is an event which baffles every attempt at explanation. Nor are their previously violent political disagreements, in any shape, the result of supposition; nor can they be attributed to the various lights in which the agitation of political questions is frequently to be viewed. They are inherent, essential, radical; founded on the very basis of the human heart and mind. We can neither mistake nor forget them. They are all, unhappily for the parties, on record, noted down in letters which no pen can erase, which no time can obliterate. They are enregistered among the reports of the parliamentary debates, which are destined to furnish materials to the future historian, and on which he will, no doubt, descant with many a blush and sigh.

The political life of Mr. Fox, (which, with all its

its errors, from an admiration of his wonderful talents, one is inclined to investigate with tenderness) has certainly furnished a strong precedent for such an union; but that such men as Lord Spencer, Lord Grenville, Mr. Windham, and a few others, should have ventured to imitate him in that act, which, to use the mildest language, has cast a shade over his political fame, is a subject of general astonishment and regret. In saying this, I am not an enemy, by any means, to a firm, patriotic, constitutional opposition: so far from it, that I always rejoice when there is an enlightened and respectable set of men, who, from honourable public principles, watch over the measures, examine the motives, and controul the influence of administration; warn them of their follies, detect their errors, and call them to a severe account for a wanton misapplication of their powers. This is what every one, who properly comprehends, and sincerely loves, the spirit of the British constitution, must ever most ardently desire. But an opposition actuated and governed by these laudable and consistent views, will be as distant from faction and caprice as from tame or corrupt compliance; will resist bad measures, not bad and good equally; will oppose measures which have a vitious, a ruinous, or an arbitrary tendency, from whatever set of men

 they

they may proceed, and not oppose any and every measure, merely because it is introduced by his Majesty's ministers.

When a negociation was going forward some months ago, to bring in an administration on general principles, in which it was purposed to include men of all parties most conspicuous for their abilities, desirable as such an object would have been, could any sincere co-operation have been expected, it is not difficult to imagine which party would have been destined to yield. If Mr. Fox had formed part of an administration with Mr. Pitt, it is very evident that the former gentleman must, in some measure, have surrendered his public conduct and opinions to the latter.*

And

* Lord Grenville in a late debate said, Why reproach me with forming a connection with Mr. Fox, when Mr. Pitt himself, not long since, recommended that gentleman to his Majesty to fill one of the most important offices of the state? Whether Mr. Pitt followed his own judgment and inclination, or the apparent wishes of the country, on this occasion, I shall not attempt to determine: however, an insuperable objection came from a higher quarter. But had this connection taken place, as far as Mr. Pitt was concerned, the dissimilitude would have been very striking from that which Lord Grenville has thought proper to form. Mr. Fox, as I have observed, coalescing with Mr. Pitt, must have yielded to Mr. Pitt's principles; whereas Lord Grenville, by coalescing with Mr. Fox, has yielded

And for this plain reason: because the government of the country could not have been conducted on opposition principles, much less on those principles which have, at various times, been sanctioned and professed by Mr. Fox. Many of this justly celebrated orator's most remarkable sentiments and declarations must have been virtually abjured, before he could have been admitted into his Majesty's councils; and, had he been reinstated there, he, no doubt, would have striven to atone for them, by rendering those services to his country which his splendid talents are so well fitted to confer. If, therefore, the government could have been smoothly carried on; if union, or any thing like union, in the cabinet, could have been hoped for; if party hatred and animosity could have been buried in oblivion; if the recollection of past bitterness could have been expunged, and all these transcendent minds could have sincerely coalesced for the advantage of the commonwealth; it would have been an event of cordial congratulation with every one who is attached to the welfare of his country. But how so many obstinate difficulties could have been surmounted; how so many elementary and

yielded to Mr. Fox's principles; from which he, through a long course of years, completely dissented, and which he was in the habit of representing in a most questionable shape.

recurring causes of mutual reproach and aggravation could have been silenced; how so many seeds of disunion and irritation could have been eradicated; it is beyond the verge of imagination to conceive.

This negociation having failed, and the administration of the country having been constituted on a less comprehensive, but a more congruous basis, all the feelings of the old opposition are revived, and, strengthened as they are by new proselytes, we may expect that their operations will be carried on with increased exertion and bitterness. The Spanish war will, no doubt, form a point of attack;* but as, on this subject, it is probable that some of their less violent supporters will desert their standards, another has been more peculiarly selected as the criterion of their strength. On this occasion they seem determined to muster all their forces, and to make their chief stand. And it is certainly well chosen for the purpose, as it is calculated, above all others, to occasion warmth and dissension, and to embarrass his Majesty's ministers. This question, which is so interesting to the internal government of the united kingdom, and which, it is under-

* On the discussion of this question, the division in the Lords was 36 against 114, in the Commons 106 against 313.

stood,

stood, will be brought forward for the consideration of Parliament during the present session, is the emancipation of the Irish Roman Catholics. It is, however, a subject which, in my opinion, those who think soundly would, in these critical times, wish to wave, as there is none on which men entertain more opposite sentiments, or which is likely to create, particularly in Ireland, greater animosities and heats.

If the justice of the cause were merely the consideration; if it simply were asked, should not the majority of a kingdom, professing any particular faith, not only be protected in their mode of worship, but have granted to them every privilege and immunity which appertain to others? few would be inclined to answer in the negative. But this is far from being an insulated question. In it are necessarily involved most grave and cogent relative considerations, which are pre-eminently adapted to excite hesitation and doubt.

Justice is of two kinds, simple and mixed. In the first instance, as it stands alone and unconnected; in the second, as it endangers, or trenches upon, the hitherto acknowledged rights of others. As it regards the first point, it might be a very wise act of the legislature to grant the request immediately on application: as it regards the second, it becomes a case of most momentous and delicate

delicate deliberation; and, according to circumstances, may be the precursor of most beneficial or most disastrous consequences. To that simple justice, which improves the condition of one set of men without deteriorating that of another, every liberal mind, the moment the appeal is made, must at once accede. But mixed justice, which professes not that innoxious nature, which comprehends relative rights and claims, and which, by being hastily distributed, may seriously infringe the privileges and enjoyments of others, and through them may lead to the public at large, cannot be investigated with too much minuteness.

The possession of freedom, and the abolition of all those abuses and restraints which are inconsistent with the rational exercise of it, seem to be an inherent right of our nature. Yet even this chief instrument of the happiness of social life must not be precipitantly or indiscriminately granted: because, if it were, it would defeat its own end, and, instead of commanding the object in view, would only lead to misery and perplexity of every description. All improvement must be gradual. People must pass through the hardships of savage life before they reach the benefits of polished society. Before any great change be introduced among them, they must be properly prepared

prepared for its reception; otherwise, whatever may be its intrinsic worth, the hopes of all parties will be grievously disappointed. If, for example, the privileges of the British constitution were, from a beneficent motive, bestowed on the Russian, the Hungarian, or the Polish peasants, who, time out of mind, have been groaning under the terrors and the lash of vassalage; although the boon, abstractedly, would be the greatest that could be conferred, yet can the most romantic speculatist conceive, as it affected the lot of these oppressed people, that their happiness would be in the smallest degree advanced? Exonerated at once, and without preparation, from their submissive state, the use to which they would instantly apply their freedom would be to spread desolation through their country. To burn and destroy, to seize property, to ransack churches, to degrade and murder their former masters, such would be the savage occupations of these enfranchised zealots; till at last some daring leader, bolder or more fortunate than the rest, would repress their violences by binding down their passions with their original chains. Such would be the certain effects of such privileges granted under such circumstances. Indiscriminate massacre, and pillage, and violation, would reign, till things were brought back to their former state. Yet no one will

will for a moment deny, that the British constitution possesses innumerable advantages over a barbarous feudality by which our most natural feelings are insulted, and our most obvious rights infringed. But the fact is, men must be enlightened before they can be free, otherwise those very passions and virtues which, when properly disciplined, are employed in their preservation, blaze out in an opposite course, and precipitate their destruction. We cannot have a more convincing or tragical exposition in testimony of the soundness of this proposition, than what has been afforded by the French revolution; which, after the entire range of every crime committed in every excess, has terminated in the triumph of a more condensed tyranny.

I have deemed it necessary to say thus much, as an introduction to my view of a most important question; a question, the agitation of which, however an object of fervent desire with some, is sincerely deprecated, in the present critical state of that divided country, by many of its wisest and most enlightened politicians. Nor should the Irish themselves, I mean those of them who are most immediately concerned, press it at present, considering the liberality with which they have already been treated.

Since

Since the commencement of his present Majesty's reign, immunities have been granted to his Catholic subjects in Ireland, which were certainly never dreamt of previously to his accession. But one step has pointed out the propriety of another; and it has only been the readiness with which their complaints have been listened to, and the facility with which their desires have been complied with, which have conducted them to this ultimate demand. The first redress which was petitioned for was the toleration of their religion.* In this they hardly expected to succeed, but, having obtained it, a farther wish was expressed, which, being also accomplished, created a fresh desire; and so they went on, increasing their demands as their demands were satisfied, till they have left but one restraint unrepealed. This restraint, which, if rescinded, they aver would be the completion of their wishes, is a very trifling one compared with many which have been before annulled; as it only excludes from a seat in Parliament, the highest ranks in the army and

* The system of concession to the Roman Catholics began about the year 1773. Previously to that period, they laboured under disabilities which placed them in a complete state of vassalage. It is, however, much to be regretted that their turbulence has, by no means, been mitigated by the favours conferred on them by the legislature.

navy, and about eighteen or twenty confidential offices of state. Other restrictions affected the whole community; but this, in its most enlarged operation, cannot be supposed to prejudice above fifty or sixty individuals out of the aggregate of the Roman Catholics in Ireland. In one sense, indeed, I am aware that it may be said to concern the whole body; as, if this limitation were removed, all might aspire to the situations which would be thus thrown open to the ambition of all. Still this is straining it to a latitude and interpretation of which it will not fairly admit.

The Roman Catholics allege, by way of shewing the extent of this grievance, that they contribute to the taxes equally with his Majesty's other subjects, without being consulted in the imposition of them.* But how many thousands and hundreds of thousands of his majesty's subjects, in all parts of his empire, many of them too men of considerable property and great stake in the country, are placed in the samep redicament? If those who have no voice were not as well and

* This, however, is not precisely the case, for although they are not allowed to appoint representatives from their own body, they still may elect those protestants whom they prefer, many of whom are as sincerely attached to their interests, and fully as capable of promoting them, as if they were of the same religious persuasion.

as efficiently represented as those who have; if the protection of the laws were only extended to those who assisted in their enactment; or if they were administered with partiality towards any particular description of people; here would be most serious cause of complaint. But the Roman Catholics must know and feel, that constituted as the Parliament is, they possess in every respect the full privileges of British subjects in common with others, with the exception of one, which has been withheld on grounds very intimately connected with the safety of the country. But considering the extreme caution of former reigns, a caution warranted by very sound reasons of state; considering the distance and reserve with which the Roman Catholics of Ireland were uniformly regarded by his Majesty's predecessors; it must be allowed that they have received innumerable blessings from the present king.* The disposition to

* The Roman Catholics in Ireland enjoy the full and free exercise of their religion, and colleges have even been founded by the state for the education of their clergy; they are eligible to offices, the emoluments of which do not exceed 300*l.* a year; they can bear commissions in the army as high as the rank of colonel; they can practise at the bar, and sit as magistrates; and they have every privilege of the elective franchise. All these concessions have been granted by his present majesty. They are thus already in possession of every civil right: they

 are

to comply with their wishes, to redress their grievances, and to restore them to a proper degree of political consideration, has been most liberally demonstrated; and if the *last* and, as they *say*, the *only* prayer which they have now to prefer, should be rejected, they are bound, from a sense of former concessions, to bear the disappointment with patience and moderation.

The disabilities under which they long laboured, were considered, at the time at which they were enforced, as essentially necessary to the preservation of the government, and of the ecclesiastical establishment of the empire; and although, as men have become more enlightened, and the church and state have felt themselves more secure, many of these impediments have been removed, yet some may still, even with the least prejudiced, be supposed to exist. It is, therefore, no more than prudence requires, to deliberate most maturely on these points before they are finally repealed.*

The

are only excluded from political power; and if we consult the authority of history, it certainly exhibits very strong reasons against blending people of all religious persuasions in the government of a country.

* We must ever keep in mind, that the despotism of the French and Spanish monarchies was, in great measure, established on the ruin of the protestant cause in those countries; and

The grand objection against the wisdom of this measure, is the difficulty of reconciling the tenets of the Church of Rome with the safety of the Church of England, or, indeed, of the British constitution. The doctrines of that church strike at the root of many of those maxims which we have been accustomed to hold sacred, and are completely subversive of that mild system of forbearance and toleration for which the government and prevailing religion of this country are so eminently remarkable. The spirit of proselytism among the Roman Catholics is already sufficiently active, without arming it with any additional means; and, if not so successful as formerly, that diminution is not to be attributed to any relaxation of their zeal, but to the additional knowledge (that most powerful enemy to bigotry) which has been distributed through all ranks and classes of the population of most parts of the British empire. These improvements in education have, however, by all accounts, by no means kept pace among the Irish peasants, who, in many provinces, are represented to be still immersed in the grossest ignorance.

The northern parts of Ireland are the most

and that the freedom of our own constitution was, in great measure, derived from its success.

orderly,

orderly, the most enlightened, the most industrious, and, consequently, the most prosperous and happy. But here the people are chiefly protestants; which proves the superior influence of a mild and liberal religion, over one which is calculated to repress the career of improvement, to engender laziness and vice, and, in some respects, to imbrute the very understanding of man. The same distinction may be observed to prevail in every other part of Europe where protestants are placed in competition with catholics. The tenets of the former encourage, those of the latter confine, the energies of our best faculties. A state of ignorance is, indeed, most consonant with the views of the Romish church, because it is best suited for the reception of those superstitious and erroneous doctrines which lay the foundation of that blind attachment for which its members are so conspicuous.

These fatal obstructions to all activity, or improvement, might, no doubt, by wise and wholesome regulations, be materially diminished. The establishment of schools in different parts of Ireland, similar to those founded in Scotland, would powerfully conduce to the removal of many of those preposterous prejudices on which the Roman Catholic faith is reared. This, I think, should be done as a preparatory step to complete emancipation.

pation. We should also endeavour to weaken the influence of the priesthood over the lower classes; an instrument which is so often converted into an engine of oppression, and which, by acting on the imagination, is frequently exercised in a manner highly detrimental to morals, industry, and happiness. This might be effected by providing a national fund for those who are really necessary for the discharge of the duties of the Roman Catholic church. By thus granting stipends to the officiating members, you would, in a great degree, break up the ruinous connection which at present subsists between the priests and their followers. By rendering them dependent on the government, you would in the same proportion attach them to it; and what is also of the greatest importance, you would have an opportunity of selecting the most enlightened and the most worthy, and consequently, of putting a stop to many of those baneful doctrines which are at present inculcated with such deleterious success.*

* The terrors of excommunication are exercised by many of these priests over the superstitious multitude with most powerful effect. Some of the higher classes, indeed, are not exempt from these foolish fears. We must recollect that it was the influence of a priest, operating on the bigotry of James II. which induced that monarch to break his coronation oath, by which he lost his crown.

After

After all, however, one great difficulty would remain to impede the accomplishment of this final act.

According to the constitutional law of this empire, the king is placed, and for very wise purposes, at the head of the church and state. He is the fountain from which all honour, and one of the fountains from which all power, flow.* But the acknowledged head of the Roman Catholic faith is the Pope; a person from whom we have been, for near three centuries, completely separated, and whom, from a recollection of past occurrences, we still regard with enmity and dread. Yet the Roman Catholics most stedfastly and professedly look up to him as the chief whom they are bound to support; who can alone confer spiritual dignity or preferment, and alone legalize their ecclesiastical proceedings. In church affairs he holds paramount jurisdiction; he is still consulted in all clerical concerns; and he still nominates all their titular bishops. But how such a power, or such an interference, can be subscribed to by the sovereign and parliament of these realms, it is difficult to imagine. It may, indeed, be said, that the emancipation of the Ro-

* It was this union of spiritual and civil power which put an end to those dangerous disputes which were perpetually arising respecting the limits of these separate jurisdictions.

man

man Catholics might be conditional; that this interference and acknowledged supremacy of the Pope might be renounced; that the king might appoint to the higher benefices; and that a new form of oath might be prescribed.* This would certainly, in some measure, remove the stumbling-block. But will they be satisfied with such limitations? Will they, I mean, not only *apparently* but *really* be satisfied? This point should be previously fully explained and understood, so as to put all future discussion of the question at rest.

In our intercourse with these active and aspiring agents, we cannot proceed with too much caution. We must recollect that one of the principles of their creed is to mislead; and that a deception practised for the advancement of their church, or the dissemination of their religion, loses in their eyes all its moral guilt. In short, for any crime an absolution is an atonement, and

* It is said, that the parts of the consecration oath of the catholic bishops which are most offensive to the protestant church have, on a representation to the pope, been *by his order* expunged; and that a fresh clause has been introduced, respecting allegiance to the crown, such as was approved of by the late empress of Russia for the catholic prelates of her empire. It is, however, difficult to comprehend the validity of this declaration; when they, at the same time, contend, that the infallibility of their general councils must for ever render their principles immutable.

a plenary indulgence from the Pope can at once exculpate the whole sect.*

Now, supposing all this to prosper, even in a political point of view, the Pope being their pastoral leader, and the director and guide of their conscience, and, at the same time, a mere creature and instrument in the hands of Bonaparte, one can easily imagine an abundance of embarrassment and mischief arising out of the subject.† The nature of the limitations must be therefore precisely defined, and the conditions on which emancipation should be consented to most unequivocally stated, otherwise it may only be an

* What are we to think of the pretensions of the Romish church, when, even in an enlightened age, we find Leo X. openly carrying on a spiritual traffic, to the total dissolution of virtue, religion, and morals? This artful pontiff, who well knew how to take advantage of the stupidity and superstition of mankind, published a general sale of indulgences which were to operate as a complete remission of sins, and to restore to the primitive purity of baptism. Stated prices were fixed for particular crimes. The popes still claim this dispensing power; and although no liberal or honest man would avail himself of it, yet there are many wicked, artful, and designing people, still left to practise on the credulity of an ignorant peasantry, who may turn it, as indeed they have, to the worst of purposes.

† The order of Jesuits, which was finally suppressed by Ganganelli, has been lately restored by the present Pope at the desire of Bonaparte, with what views it is easy to guess.

intro-

introduction to fresh claims and pretensions, till, at last, the very act of settlement itself is assailed.

Notwithstanding all that I have said, I am still a friend to emancipation, but cautiously, conditionally, and seasonably acceded. Before the Irish rebellion, I rather wished it to take place. The horrible events of those disgraceful times, if they have not destroyed my opinion as to the policy of granting it *at all*, have very much staggered it as to the expediency of granting it *now*. A measure of this nature, when once acceded to, cannot be recalled. Although no political incapacity should be continued longer than the necessity of the case requires, we are for that very reason, before we repeal it, bound to ascertain whether the necessity no longer exist. No reform should be matter of mere metaphysical conjecture: we should, beforehand, be morally certain of its good effects. Although the rebellion was in its origin political, religious considerations were soon introduced. On that melancholy occasion, the catholics, in many instances, committed the most desperate outrages, and proved that the extermination of the protestants was not altogether absent from their thoughts.* There is

* The massacre of the protestants in the barn of Scullabogue, so late as the year 1798, is one of the greatest stains that disfigures the history of any country.

also a powerful party among them, denominated the separatists, who are disposed to proceed to any extremities. These sentiments, I am fully convinced, are far from being espoused by men of sense, character, or weight, still they have been expressed by a set of misled miscreants of that persuasion, and ought not only to induce caution, but to retard the fulfilment of their views. That rebellion, with all the barbarous enormities with which it was accompanied, has certainly disposed me to consider the measure in a very different light; and, warmly as I might have advocated it before, I am now decidedly of opinion, that the time is not yet come at which it may be granted without risk. The situation of Ireland, notwithstanding what has been advanced to the contrary, is still very critical. Much mischief is still carrying on.* The miners are at work, and we must guard against the explosion. Times and circumstances must be weighed. Let the deluded Irish first return to their duty; let them first prove that they are

* This is evidently the opinion of the government of this country, from their having deemed it necessary to continue the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. In the debate which took place on that subject in the House of Commons on the 8th of February, it was curious to hear Mr. Windham arguing against the measure; he who, whilst in administration, was so violent on the opposite side.

good

good and loyal subjects; let the embers of sedition and rebellion be first extinct; before they make the application; and let them have no room to suppose, that what should be bestowed from indulgence is extorted from fear. The Irish emancipation also involves a question of much importance in this country, as, on the emancipation of the Roman Catholics in Ireland, those of England would certainly be entitled to participate in the benefit. The Test Acts must also be immediately repealed,* and people of every religious persuasion must be set free. Though the church of England be strong from its purity, its liberality, and the general character of its ministers, yet much caution and enquiry are incumbent before such an innovation is assented to. At all events I should wish the discussion to be postponed till the restoration of peace.

* The Test Act, which passed in 1673, obliges all persons, holding any public office, to take the oath of supremacy and allegiance; to receive the sacrament according to the rites of the church of England; and to abjure all belief in the doctrine of transubstantiation. The second Test Act, which passed in 1678, declares popery idolatry, and excludes all members, who refuse to take it, from both houses of parliament. When it was sent up to the Lords, the Duke of York made an appeal to the house, and, on a motion of his own, an exception in his favour was carried by a majority of two. This small majority was a proof of the opinion of the country, and the use which the Duke afterwards made of the indulgence I need not state.

When

When that blessing shall arrive it is quite useless to surmise. I fear that it is still very remote. So many serious causes of lasting enmity and exasperation have been accumulated by the government of France against this country, that signal must be the atonement, and vast the changes, before any thing like reconciliation can be hoped for. There is so much to undo before any thing can be done, even as preliminary to pacification, that the councils and conduct of France must be nearly reversed before we can ever again listen to proposals, or consent to a cessation of hostile attack. Bonaparte has, throughout his career, set so completely at defiance every prescriptive rule of religion, or morals, or law, or temperance, or common decency, that I should be at a loss to define on what principles of union we could be brought to agree.

When the peace of Amiens was consented to by the blind and yielding administration of this country, every motive of prudence, policy, or ambition, which can be supposed to operate on the head or heart of man, seemed to enjoin, on the part of the French government, the most scrupulous observance of its terms; yet Bonaparte chose to break them. Judging, from the humiliating conditions of that treaty, and the eagerness with which they had been accepted, that such

such a disposition could only arise from the absolute necessity of the case, he considered us as a vanquished people. He consequently thought it no longer requisite to practise disguise, as the more openly he expressed his contempt, the more likely was he, in his own opinion, to maintain his superiority. Luckily, however, in this instance, the people and the government of this country were at variance, and what the latter would possibly without a murmur have submitted to, the former felt the necessity of resenting. It was the decisive cast of this sentiment which exonerated the commonwealth, and first roused the ministers from their slumbers. Repeated insults and menaces had fired the blood of a high-spirited people. They felt the stain on their honour; they felt that their independence was endangered, and loudly vociferated for arms. Every incentive stimulated their feelings; the actual, the retrospective, and the prospective view. They justly comprehended the dignified part which they had to sustain. They dwelt on the feats of ancient story; they recollected the power which they had just evinced; they beheld concentrated the laurels which, through a long and luminous series of ages, had wreathed their warriors' brows; they recounted the victories of their ancestors, and those which had been achieved by a living generation;

ration; they disdained the ill-merited conclusions which this minion of fortune had ventured to disclose; and, whilst they despised his threats, they resolved to punish his insolence. Then, and not till then, war was thought of by the ministers, who were incited to their duty by increasing clamours. They deemed it prudent to yield to the just indignation of an injured country; to temporize no longer; but to become the organ of the nation's voice.

If ever a war was embarked in with fearful reluctance by a government, or unanimous zeal by a people, it was this. Every pulse beat in unison, and every heart panted for revenge. Instead of being deterred from the last resort of power by the empty threat of invasion, it was this very threat which exasperated us to action. The vivifying warmth of patriotism diffused itself through the land, and every breast was penetrated by the genial heat. We were impressed with the necessity of contention, and with the value of the prize for which we were about to contend. We were convinced that we must either forfeit, or preserve, the accumulated glory and blessings of ages. All the inestimable advantages which distinguish this great and free country, and which have grown out of the prudent perseverance and active labours of many centuries, were now at stake.

stake. We also anticipated in our own ruin, the wreck of laws and governments, and the total dissolution of religion, morals, and social order, throughout the civilized world. We felt that we alone had the firmness to resist a consuming fire which was overspreading Europe, and which, in its fatal and rapid progress, was sweeping away every benefit and ornament of life.

We, therefore, fearless of consequences, girt on the sword. The gauntlet was thrown down in desperation: we have taken it up with composure. We have accepted the defiance; but the challenger has broken his appointment, and has hitherto shrunk from the field. Let then the other powers of Europe take warning. Let them follow our splendid footsteps. Let them be animated by our illustrious, though hitherto solitary example. Let them not only oppose further intrusion, but repel what has already taken place. In our exertions they may read their own success. We have not misled by fanciful speculation: we have demonstrated by practical experience. We have shewn how easily tyrannical perfidy may be defeated, despotic power resisted, and empty menaces exposed, by the manly proceedings of justice, the zealous enthusiasm of courage, and the united efforts of patriotism. We have saved our country: the French have involved theirs more

 inextricably

inextricably than ever: and as moral evil is the parent of natural evil, they will long have to mourn the acts of their leaders.

Bonaparte has kept assembled his troops and his gun-boats in formidable array; but notwithstanding his repeated declarations to Lord Whitworth, that, whatever might be the consequences, he would head an invading army, their manœuvres and operations, with their vain-glorious general, have been hitherto disgracefully confined to their own shores. Instead of acting the part of a warrior, he has strutted on the stage, with a sweeping train, in the character of a mock Emperor; and instead of ratifying his pretensions as a commander, has been amusing his gaping and frivolous slaves with pantomimical extravagances and dumb shew.

He has, indeed, since his accession to the Imperial dignity, by way of transmitting intelligence to his faithful subjects, condescended to inform them of their happiness and prosperity, of which they, till then, poor souls! had been perfectly ignorant. In this view he was pleased to deliver a speech on the 26th of last December to the Legislative Body; and likewise, for a similar humane purpose, to order to be read, a few days after, by one of the Presidents of the same enlightened assembly, a paper, called an *exposition* of the present

sent state of France. Now whether the round assertions which these strange documents contain be true or false, as no one in France will venture to contradict, or even to investigate them, all ideas about their authenticity must depend on the opinion entertained of the veracity of their author. Under a free government every measure is canvassed before the experiment is made, and the spirit of enquiry is sure to detect and expose the errors which may attend it. Despotism, amidst the fear and silence which surround it, pursues a different course. Absurd as its acts or statements may be, no one will be found bold enough to resist the one, or to arraign the other. But whether true or false, the state papers in question must be regarded as a most curious production, and every way worthy of having been manufactured by the cabinet of St. Cloud.

In Bonaparte's most *gracious* speech from the *throne*, which he addresses to the *princes* and others of that august assembly, he dwells with exultation on the flourishing state of the finances, assuring them that no new sacrifices will be required (a problem which remains to be demonstrated); and, by way of proving his assertion, that he has no wish of exercising a domineering influence, he modestly informs them, that he is determined not to relinquish what he has already ac-

quired. The answers or addresses are a worthy corollary to the imperial oration, in which they, with true French audacity, impiety, and complaisance, talk of laws, morals, and religion, in the same breath, and no doubt with the same veneration and conviction, in which they mention the sentiments of moderation and peace which have constantly animated the most profane, insatiable, and turbulent man of the age.*

The *exposition*, which may be considered as an appendix to the imperial speech, is a still more extraordinary composition. Contrary however to the rules which are so strongly recommended by Horace, it opens at once with a blaze about plots, and conspiracies, to which succeeds a gentle description of internal prosperity. Then comes

* Whilst France is uttering all her senseless jargon about moderation, she is, on every side, extending the limits of her domineering influence and power. Let us contemplate for a moment her gigantic strides, and note down what she has already seized. Nice, Savoy, Piedmont, Lombardy, Tuscany, Modena, the Imperial fiefs, the tract of country on the left bank of the Rhine, Brabant, Geneva, the Pays de Vaud, the Valais, and Avignon—have been all formally or virtually annexed Holland, Switzerland, and Genoa, are also, as far as political consequence and independence go, completely under her dominion: whilst Spain, Portugal, the petty states of Germany, the Roman territory, and Naples, although they have been allowed to retain their sovereigns, and the outward forms of their government, can no longer be called independent states. Such are the effects of *French moderation!*

the

the prosperity of St. Domingo (not a word about the new emperor Jacques, who claims seniority to Bonaparte,* nor of all the outrages which make the very life-blood run cold, which have desolated that once flourishing island), Martinique, and other colonial possessions. We are next told that their armies are contented to remain at home; and that their seamen are learning tactics in their own ports. The first act of this dramatic exhibition is closed with the account of a conquest (the only one which France has made) over an unarmed and unsuspicious people with whom she was at profound peace, and whose security was apparently guarantied by the principal continental powers. This transaction is descanted upon with wonderful effect.

The second act opens with a kind of geographical description or analysis of Europe, which, however, is rather laconically delineated. Spain, we are informed, is at war—other parts are in repose. But the manner in which they are alluded to, is a sort of barometer to Bonaparte's own sensations, and enables us to form a tolerably correct judgment of the actual relations which they bear to France.

* Dessalines was crowned Emperor of Hayti on the 18th of October 1804: Bonaparte was crowned at Paris on the 2d of December following.

The

The Italian and Helvetian republics, the creation of his own power, are most lavishly panegyrized. The Batavian republic, which is not so immediately the offspring of his fancy, and which is at last beginning to shew some spirit of discontent and resistance, is as severely reprimanded. The emperor of the Romans is not recognised by that proud title; but, in order to render him secondary to Bonaparte, is termed the emperor of Austria; and, whilst an attempt is made to degrade him from his political consequence by detaching him from all controul over the Germanic Body as their supreme chief, he is modestly counselled to pursue his commercial arrangements. The states of Germany, separated from their emperor, are to preserve their friendly relations with France. The emperor of Russia is also advised to follow his plans of trade, and to improve the internal economy of his extensive dominions. The inevitable ruin of Turkey, now no longer an ally of France, is confidently predicted. The kings of Prussia and Denmark are coldly praised, and as for poor Sweden and Naples, they are not even noticed.

From this abridged history, frivolous and contemptible as it may appear in the outline, we can very plainly gather, that Bonaparte is losing his influence on the continent, and with his influence his

his temper. The rage and childish petulance of his character are continually predominant; and as he speaks with severity, or with favour, or with indifference, of a power, we can pretty nearly trace the degree of political intimacy or alienation which exists between that power and France. Thus it is easy to perceive, that Prussia and Denmark have given offence; that Russia and Turkey are forming alliances elsewhere; that Austria is indisposed; that the states of Germany are suspected; and that Naples and Sweden are hostile. Of his appendages, that Italy and Switzerland are, for the present, quiet; but that Holland is disposed to revolt. The peroration, which has a sympathetic connexion with the exordium, concludes with a threat against England, but rather less rudely delivered than that of last year (no doubt from his high rank in the fashionable world, and the additional polish of his auditory), and an assurance that France will accept of no conditions but those of the treaty of Amiens. These declarations, like his boasts of invasion, are recorded sentiments; and, like them, will in all probability be renounced. Bonaparte is so much in the habit of breaking his promises, and of flying from his engagements, that his declaration, as a declaration, is of little importance. He will easily be able to accommodate it to his interest, and we

shall,

shall, I trust, be careful to make him lower his tone.*

To prove indeed, in the outset, his utter inconsistency, a few days after this pompous statement is delivered, he sends a messenger to England with overtures of peace. What, so soon! even before his historical, or dramatical, or fabulous composition, can be circulated through his own dominions. It must be owned that his productions will not stand the test of criticism. They are governed by no rules:—all the unities of Aristotle are departed from; nor is there either beginning, middle, or end. But I suppose the

* On the 4th of February last a second kind of exposition, or report, was made by order of Bonaparte to the Conservative Senate by Talleyrand, to the Legislative Body by Segur, and to the Tribunate by St. Jean d'Angely. The two first were pompous but rather moderate; but as for the last, it would be difficult to crowd more nonsense, more falsehood, more profaneness, more vulgar abuse, or more fulsome flattery, into a smaller compass. Talleyrand says, that a ten-years state of delay would of all menaces be the most terrible to us—It would certainly be the most convenient for them. Segur, although he asserts that France condescends not to return invective, says, a little lower down, that we are the eternal enemy of the liberty of the seas and the tranquillity of nations—and St. Jean d'Angely, among other sagacious discoveries, informs the Tribunate, that France has already overcome three out of four of the chances which obstructed her views. The three overcome are, the assembly of her ships, her flotilla, and her men—the fourth, which remains to be overcome, is the *invasion*.

fire

fire of genius is intended to make amends for the wild eccentricities and puerile irregularities with which they abound. But what, in soberness, or in common sense, are we to think of all these glaring absurdities and contradictions? the sword in one hand, the olive in the other; the smile of treachery on one cheek, the frown of defiance on the other; excommunications and anathemas, professions of friendship and looks of partiality, all huddled together, not offered as alternatives, but presented at the same moment.

And can this man possibly imagine, even in the most furious paroxysms of his insanity, in all the extravagance of his fancy, in the wildness of his most incoherent speculations, in the ruinous hurry and bustle of those schemes which he is perpetually hatching for the woe of mankind, that we are a people to be again duped by the audaciousness or the solemnity of his professions? Can he suppose that we are so very simple, so very credulous and inexperienced? Can he conceive, that we, who know that his whole life has been a tissue of the cruellest enormities, and the basest deceit, under which we have so lately smarted, will allow ourselves to be again over-reached by the profligacy or the duplicity of his character? This Proteus, who has assumed every shape; who has been, by turns, an engineer, a public executioner,

 a general,

a general, a poisoner, a deserter, a consul, an emperor, and an assassin, and who would now assume the mild and beneficent office of a pacificator; can he imagine, that, blazed abroad as his infamy has been in every market-town, and village, and hamlet, of this empire, we are again to be gulled by his impostures? He has a second time tried his malice; he has a second time essayed his power. He has, by every invention and mode, (save that of honour) sought to accomplish our downfall and destruction. But whilst his own forces have been every where cooped up; whilst their laurels, their strength, and their patience, are withering in inaction; he has found us absolutely impregnable. We have been ranging at large, insulting him in his very ports, and making him retreat from our vengeance.

The conviction of these disgraces is not only stamped on his own mind, but is beginning to make a visible impression on the continental powers. They contrast *his* impotence with *our* security, from which they would at length derive and establish their own success. They are beginning to take courage, and to grow warm, by our example. They are beginning, properly to understand, and duly to appreciate, the real merits of this arch-impostor. They are beginning to see through the quackeries of this state empiric, who has, for

so long a time, been amusing them with his fooleries, whilst he has been destroying them with his drugs. And, above all, they are beginning to comprehend their own interests, which are so radically adverse to his, and to which they have hitherto been so unaccountably blind.

His Majesty's speech from the throne, which is one of the most satisfactory that we have for a long time heard, after dwelling upon various topics, concludes with a most animating assurance. He informs us, that he is earnestly disposed for peace, but that no peace can be made without bearing a relation to the continent, with which, if not the safety, at least the tranquillity, of this country is so intimately blended.

As to *security*, we have at length, I guess, proved even to the dark and sceptical mind of Bonaparte himself, that, independently of every assistance, that, even with the rest of Europe leagued against us, we can indisputably command it. On this point we require no succour. The vigour of the country is more than adequate to its defence against any force which may be desperate enough to venture on the experiment of attacking it.

It is, at the same time, most gratifying and consolatory to perceive, that the continental powers are, at length, awakening, from their deep slum-

bers; that they are about to shake off the benumbing torpor by which they have been entranced; and that they are preparing to prescribe limits to the ambition and usurpation of an insulting and pernicious tyrant. Bonaparte is raised high, but not above the stroke of adversity; and, whilst his sycophants are extolling the extent of his power, fortune is perhaps meditating a fatal blow. He seems aware of this himself. Whilst he is surrounded by his satellites, he is dreading the insurrection of his people, and sits trembling amidst the adulation of regal pomp. He is perhaps beginning to discover that the weight of a crown is too ponderous for his brow to sustain, and much would he probably give, if he could throw off his crimes with his purple, and descend, if not with splendid, at least with spotless fame, to a private station. He has climbed up to a pinnacle on which he totters, and the precipices which encompass him are gaping for their prey. With such fears as these to disturb his nightly rest, and to dispel his waking dreams, he has again had recourse to the shallow expedient of proposing negotiation. The hope of conciliating the irritated feelings of his degraded subjects; of appeasing the increasing dissatisfaction of an incensed soldiery; of spreading discontent among us, and disunion among our allies,

and

and thus embarrassing and enfeebling the councils of this nation, these motives have all combined to recommend the late measure.

He has thus again sought to amuse and delude us by pacific professions. An answer has been already returned, consistent with our spirit, with our dignity, and also with our moderation. He has been informed, that in addition to the safety of the Continent, which we shall ever regard with jealousy and becoming interest, no further explanation can be entered into, till we have consulted with those continental powers with whom we are, at present, "in confidential intercourse and connexion." Thus, without the permission of this foolish and intemperate boaster, who was completely to insulate us; to banish us from all concern with continental arrangements; even to cut us off from all political and commercial communion with the rest of the world; former relations are again arising, and other states are beginning to be convinced of the benefits of our interference. The energies of this country seem fixed under a more vigorous administration, and Mr. Pitt's illustrious name is diffusing confidence through Europe. Russia is specifically mentioned; Sweden, Prussia, and Austria are hinted at. Let then the Corsican beware!—

But he has solemnly declared, that he will preserve

serve what he has acquired; and that nothing but the terms of the treaty of Amiens will satisfy him. Whilst he holds this language, accommodation must be most distant from our thoughts. Why talk of peace, if such are to be the preliminary stipulations which are to serve as the basis of the conditions which he means to propose? Having resumed the war in consequence of his gross infraction of every article of that humiliating treaty, is it to be presumed that we shall again agree to those identical terms? After having found our very safety endangered from the mode in which his unruly appetency prompted him to disregard the very spirit and letter of that degrading act, are we likely again to commit the same deplorable error?

The last peace was convenient for him in the highest degree, and was, in the same degree, perilous for us. It enabled him to follow with full security his insidious and ambitious machinations: it reduced us to the humble office of inoffensive spectators. Not such spectators as a British audience usually consists of, but such as visit sights under a despotic government, where, if they *cannot* applaud, they *must not* disapprove, and where the utmost latitude of liberty is to condemn in silence.

Such was the insulting accommodation which

was

was required by the French from the British government: such was the commanding province which that government both erected and assumed. The rule of Bonaparte's despotism was to extend to every British heart. His measures we were no longer at liberty to canvass. Like the Omnipotent, the presence of his power was to pervade the material and intellectual world. He was not only to be chief machinist, but he was to dive into inferior arrangements. He was not only to produce the effect, but he was to direct every movement, to arrange every wheel, to pull every string. All this was to be ordained and fulfilled according to his fancy, and we, who had paid so dearly for the spectacle, were to be precluded from canvassing its merits: we had nothing to do but to look on, to assent, and to approve.

How the blood of every Briton kindles at the recollection of these galling transactions! That we, who have been, and still continue to be, so great, should prostrate ourselves with such abject humility; that we, who are intrenched in honour and glory; who with our fleets and armies, in the remotest parts of the globe, were pursuing an uninterrupted career of victory; who were still shouting on the very field of battle; should have stooped so low as to put our hand to that ignominious treaty, is what the future

ture recorder of our annals will with difficulty bring himself to credit.

That peace is, however, now completely done away. It is now become a dead letter, and would that it could be blotted out with the pen of indignation from that page which it must ever sully! It will, however, whilst it continues a memorial of the incapacity of its authors, serve as a landmark to future peace-makers. It will, it is to be hoped, insure us from splitting again on the same rock. It will induce that mode and measure of caution, which it will be incumbent on us to observe, should it be the future destiny of this country to negotiate again with such an opponent.

Bonaparte, by his proposals, has not given proofs of any increased moderation: he has only betrayed his fears. He has disclosed, in the trepidation of his heart, all its inward tumultuous thoughts. He has shewn that he *really* entertains a very different opinion of this country from that which, during the peace, he so furiously, so indiscreetly, and so indecently declared; and which he still, in some degree, professes. He has shewn that the hope of subjugation is most distant from his expectations. There is nothing now said about heading armies which are to be sacrificed one after the other till he succeeds; nothing about

about overrunning this county *in four-and-twenty hours.* Over these subjects reigns the silence of the grave. All the pleasant parties, which were to be given at St. James's, from the plunder of the rich, lazy, and fat citizens of London, are apparently completely abandoned. On the contrary, he is satisfied to remain, uninvited at home.

Amidst all his smothered silence he has demonstrated that he feels, and acutely too, that confinement which we can command, and that chastisement which we can inflict. Six hundred thousand men in arms, kept in inaction, when that inaction continues too long, and grows out of broken promises and disappointed hopes, become a dreadful incumbrance. Plunder has hitherto kept them together; the want of plunder may urge them to mutiny; and what was raised for his defence may prove his ruin.

Confidently as Bonaparte may speak, I can never believe that his language communicates the sentiments of his heart. A tyrant knows the arts and villainies by which he has himself succeeded, and dreads the exercise of those qualifications in other men. Thus, however he may expect to retain his power through his own precarious life, he can never expect to perpetuate it in his family, or to transmit it to his posterity.

The history of the French fully proves the ne-

 cessity

cessity of controuling them by severe regulations, for whenever their chains have been relaxed, they have been guilty of the most horrible excesses. Their lively spirits require occupation; and that disposition which can be delighted with frivolous amusements, can also engage in the most desperate experiments, and perpetrate the most infamous crimes. But society cannot remain long in a forced state: the acts of wickedness, and the aberrations of folly, lead back at last to that order of things which enforces obedience. The French people, after all their wild and fatal experiments, are at last convinced that the sovereign power must be confided to one man. Under this impression, the family of Bourbon must inevitably succeed to the throne of their ancestors; and the persuasion of the necessity of monarchical government, is one of those unintentional benefits which this usurper has conferred.

We need not, therefore, be hasty in acceding to proposals, nor, above all, need we stoop to concessions to this temporary scourge. He is convinced of the insecurity of his station; he knows that he has in the very heart of France thousands and hundreds of thousands of enemies, who are thirsting for revenge. He knows that he is a stranger to the country which he has enslaved; without family, without connexions, without dignity,

nity, without honour, with nothing but crimes and fortune. He has hitherto been preserved—so have Talleyrand and Sieyes, whose wickedness and apostacy are as rank as those of any victim that has been immolated. But punishment, though frequently tardy, generally comes at last; and very few are there, among those who were most active in the atrocities for which the French Revolution, throughout its course, has been peculiarly distinguished, that have escaped a violent end.

Why then should this illustrious and powerful country listen, for an instant, to any terms but such as are consonant with the justice of its views, the feelings of its honour, and the stability of its security? Whilst we respect the rights of others, let us tenaciously maintain our own. All overtures contrary to the spirit of this maxim should be rejected at the very threshold. We can wait as long as Bonaparte. As long as he can, can we carry on war; and until he formally abandon his present avowed intentions, and submit to such stipulations as we are entitled to enforce, we ought never to think of peace.

Peace at all, indeed, with him, who has, in his conduct to others, and, as far as he has been able, to us, broken through every engagement, set at defiance every restraint, and violated every law,

both human and divine, would be an arduous task to accomplish. We cannot rely on his faith, for of that he has none; we cannot depend on his justice or his humanity, for of these qualities he is totally destitute; we cannot expect any thing from the operations of conscience, for he has proved that its influence is unknown to him. How then are we to act? Why, we must chain him down as we would a wild beast, which, if we allow to range beyond its tether, diffuses alarm, and inflicts death. To place ourselves beyond the reach of harm, we must put it out of his possibility to occasion any. We must not, for a moment, confide in his assurances or his oaths; he has forfeited every claim to this right, from a frequent violation of them all. Knowing the extent and virulence of his wishes, we can only defeat his object by circumscribing his means. We must therefore reject *his* terms, and inform him of *ours*.

What those terms should exactly be, or how they should be modified, must depend on so many contingent circumstances, that, in the present unsettled state of continental arrangements, it would be both difficult and useless to suggest. But so far we may venture to say; that they must be such as are consistent with the safety and honour

of

of a powerful and high-minded people; of a people whom he has insulted, traduced, and injured, in every way within the scope of his faculties; but, at the same time, of a people whom, as events have fully manifested, he can neither subdue nor intimidate; who can most seriously annoy him, but whom he is unable to touch.

The restoration of Hanover, and compensation, as far as compensation can be made, for the outrages there committed; the complete emancipation of the Ligurian and Helvetian republics; the withdrawing of the French troops from Holland, and the independence of the Batavian government; all interference in the affairs of Spain, and Portugal, relinquished; the reinstatement of the king of Sardinia; an apology for the insults committed against our minister at Hamburgh, and for the imprisonment of British subjects in France, contrary to the laws of war, and the public rights of civilized nations: these must be some of the leading outlines of future negotiation, and the only basis on which a peace with this country can be expected to be brought about. They will, no doubt, to many minds appear extravagant: but they are what I do not despair of seeing accomplished: for, by such means only, can we secure to ourselves the blessings of repose,

or

or curb the wild and unprincipled ambition of the new emperor.

With the domestic government of France I never thought it wise to intermeddle; nor, as far as internal arrangements went, to oppose the reigning prejudices and eccentricities of the people. Let them endeavour to settle their own affairs. If they choose to continue this man as their ruler, in what way, or by what title, little concerns us. The risk, the suffering, and the disgrace, are their own. They must abide the consequences; and although I am clearly of opinion that nothing but the old family, and, with some modifications, the old order of things, can restore tranquillity to the French, yet it is better that such a change should be brought about (and sooner or later it no doubt will) by the operation of their own judgment and conviction, than by any external pressure.

What Europe and particularly ourselves have to do with France, is to require such a state of things, such a system of political action, such a recognition of long-established and incontrovertible maxims of public law, as shall effectually prevent a repetition of those acts of extravagant insult and aggression which have shaken all rules and principles, and which affect to despise all restraint.

Such

Such therefore, or nearly such, are the terms which we have a right to require as an act of justice, and which, as an act of duty and power, we are enjoined and may hope to enforce. Above all, let us guard against precipitancy. Let those growing suspicions against France, and of distrust and hatred to Bonaparte, which are appearing on the continent, take a firm root. Let also the revival of that intimate connexion between Great Britain and the leading powers, which has so frequently before rescued Europe from slavery, feel its full effects. The people of this country, convinced as they must be of the absurdity and ruin of hasty measures, or a premature peace, will not, I am satisfied, hurry the government in their proceedings by any clamorous symptoms of impatience or discontent. The experiment of a bad peace has been already made. We have proved that it can only expose us to dishonour and misfortune, and relapse, after a short time, into a more hazardous rupture. To redeem ourselves from this intolerable state, we have again taken up arms, and, before we again lay them down, we must fix our object on a broad and secure basis. Our next act of pacification must be either founded on the true spirit of amity, or so contrived that our enemy shall not have the

power,

power, whatever may be his *will*, to molest our repose. If we swerve from these prudential maxims, I shall not consider the country as safe: —if we sign another treaty of Amiens, I shall consider the country as lost.

THE END.

T. Gillet, Printer, Salisbury-Square.

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REASONS

FOR

NOT

MAKING PEACE

WITH

BUONAPARTÉ.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A POSTSCRIPT.

BY WILLIAM HUNTER, ESQ.

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REASONS,

&c. &c.

WAR is attended with so many dreadful calamities, and peace is the source of so many inestimable blessings, that one should conceive (did not facts overset the hypothesis) that the wisdom of mankind would long since have taught them a better mode than that which is usually resorted to, of settling their disputes. But it seems, from all historical record, that no experience is sufficient to moderate the ambition, or subdue the jealousies of rival nations; and, as long as the world exists, we must, I fear, expect that efforts of mutual destruction will be the ordinary method of trial for the assertion of political rights, the redress of political wrongs, and the adjustment of political interests.

The miseries of these national conflicts are, however, so truly afflicting, and such a continual source of deprivation to the happi-

ness and prosperity of civilized life, that alt
some duration, from whatever cause th
may have begun, an anxious wish has ge
rally been shewn to terminate them: a
during their progress, periods have oft
recurred, at which, without any particu
motive, the sense of honour has appea
satisfied, the heat of animosity has subsi
and the desire of repose has prevailed. T
scene has thus been allowed to close, by
mutual restoration of conquest, and a m
tual forgetfulness of injury.

Such was usually the case whilst Europ
remained an organized community. Th
maintenance of the old federative system s
nearly balanced the strength of different
states, or sets of states, and the preservation
of that system was so firmly supported by
habit and opinion, that the means of war were
circumscribed, and its evils mitigated. Although the occasion of much intermediate suffering, yet it was not distinguished by any peculiar ferociousness of enmity; and, when it ceased, affairs were speedily restored to their former prosperity. Governments retained their political rights, and the bulk of mankind their civil liberties. Even

small

small states flourished without danger of extinction, and a sense of justice predominated, amidst the excesses of revenge, the triumphs of strength, and the accidents of fortune. When peace returned, equity and moderation returned with it, and as far as remuneration could be made, it was seldom denied. Whilst this liberal system of hostility was adhered to, half its horrors vanished, and the calamities with which it was unavoidably attended, were, in some measure, atoned for by the heroic virtues which it inspired, and the splendid atchievements which it displayed.

It has most unfortunately been the fate of the present generation, to witness a total change in this prescribed mode of waging war, and to see all the mild and honourable maxims of preceding times deserted, for the substitution of sanguinary cruelty, implacable revenge, and inordinate ambition. One man has, for some mysterious purpose, been selected as a scourge to the rest of his species. His success, aided by the pusillanimity of his adversaries, and by a concatenation of events which baffles all explanation, has enabled him to practise, hitherto with impunity,

all

all the meanness, and tyranny, and violence of his nature on prostrate humanity. From the outrageous and intolerant maxims which he adopts, the social world is reduced to that melancholy state, that war becomes preferable to peace—All hope of accommodation is dismissed from the character of an antagonist, and independence can only be preserved by resistance.

Such is the position in which what still remains of Europe, and particularly this country, is placed relatively to France: and I have no hesitation in saying, that as long as mankind is cursed with the usurpation of Buonaparté, that is, as long as France remains obedient to his iron rule, there can be neither honour nor advantage, nor even safety in repose. Whilst he is suffered to live in authority, we may as well throw away a useless scabbard, for we can only sheath the sword to our shame or our destruction. This truth is indeed becoming every day so palpable, and the opinions in support of it are becoming every day so confirmed, that I shall be spared much trouble in the statement of those positions, on which I have founded an unalterable judgment.

Prefatory to the arguments from which I shall deduce my ultimate conclusion, it will be requisite to go a little way back, and to take a cursory survey of the leading events of the last continental campaign, a campaign no less wonderful than disastrous, and involving in its history a series of accidents to which the annals of the world can furnish no parallel.

The league which was formed early in the foregoing spring, for the emancipation of the continent from the chains in which it was bound, was on a scale of grandeur, worthy of the comprehensive mind of the illustrious statesman who planned it: and although much blame has, by the heated passions of mankind, been attributed to him from its miscarriage; yet when we consider by what unaccountable blunders, on the part of our allies, that miscarriage was occasioned, Mr. Pitt must stand completely acquitted.* The

* That ignorant people should be determined in their opinions of the prudence and utility of plans by their result; that they should consider that plan wise which is successful, and that one destitute of all wisdom to which fortune denies her suffrage, is not surprising—but that men of enlightened understandings and clear perceptions should declare themselves to be under the influence of the same inconsequential conclusion, savours more of jealousy

confederacy of 1805 was one of the most formidable that ever sprang up in the European commonwealth.

jealousy or want of candour, than of that defect of judgment to which we might otherwise be inclined to impute their declarations. It must nevertheless be admitted, (if we reflect a moment) that a very bad plan may meet with fortune, and a very good one be defeated in its operation, in the same manner as a very bad action frequently reaps the reward to which a very good one is alone entitled. Yet the plans and the actions remain unaltered. They still retain the same inherent qualities, the same intrinsic merits, the same sound or prejudicial principles. All that depends on man in speculating on the contingency of future events, is to deliberate coolly, to resolve firmly, to rouse inactivity, to repress rashness, to weigh times and circumstances, to quadrate ends with means. When he has done this, he has done all that can be expected from him, and, having faithfully discharged his duty, whatever may be the event, he stands completely justified. The body of diplomatic correspondence, which was laid before parliament, proved how ardently and how beneficially Mr. Pitt had laboured for the glory of his country, and the deliverance of the civilized world. Those papers completely evinced that every thing which depended on the councils of this country was effected; that no precaution was overlooked; that every arrangement or combination which could be supplied was observed; and that nothing which political sagacity could accomplish or devise was omitted. Subsequent mistakes may have been committed, but Mr. Pitt was already on the bed of sickness, exhausted by previous intensity of application, by mental anxiety,

commonwealth. It rose most unexpectedly out of its shattered fortunes, and was chiefly produced by the influence of Mr. Pitt's character, and the credit of his name. He had long been the tried and undaunted champion of Europe. He had been the grand defender of its rights, and the principal instigator to that resistance which had struggled against the encroaching dominion of revolutionary

anxiety, and bodily pain; and his colleagues in office were deprived of the assistance and superintendance of his matchless genius. Had he, happily for his country, lived, his defence would have wanted no other advocate than himself. Disdaining those little arts to which other men so generally resort, he never courted popularity by flattering the ruinous prejudices of the people. He only wished to be judged by the purity of his intentions, and the utility of his measures. His whole life was dedicated to the service of his country, and in the service of his country he died. The last words which his lips pronounced, were an ejaculation expressive of the fervour and sincerity of his patriotism. His long and eminent services entitle him to the everlasting gratitude of this nation, and, when party feeling and animosity shall have subsided, he will be admired as much for his political address, as for his financial dexterity, the intrepidity of his mind, the splendour of his eloquence, or the integrity of his views. Posterity will do him justice; and his posthumous fame will shine forth in the estimation of future generations, with unclouded lustre.

France. Had the continental powers, at any period, duly acquitted themselves of their duty, the insolent tyranny of French usurpation had been long since repressed, and those calamities which we have now to deplore, would have been never experienced. But of all the leagues which have been concerted for the restoration of national independance, that under discussion appeared best calculated to insure the successful issue of the glorious object in view. So solid indeed were the grounds of hope, that it required all the untoward accidents and fatal errours which occurred, to defeat its operation. Had even one of those chances which followed each other with such rapidity, and which no human foresight could imagine, failed, Buonaparté was undone. The defection of the elector of Bavaria; the premature movements of Austria, both in point of distance and time; the cowardice or treachery of Mack; the hesitation of the king of Prussia; the stupidity of the prince of Auersberg; the indiscretion of the emperor of Russia; and, lastly, the treaty of Presburg; such was the developement of events, which, before they happened, appeared placed beyond the verge

of

of possibility; and which yet were all indispensably necessary to Buonaparté's success. Is then Mr. Pitt, who had so little to do with the execution, to be made responsible for such disasters; or can they, on any just grounds, be ascribed to the ascendancy of Buonaparté's genius? Allowing him, as I readily do, every credit for his celerity and decision, I cannot but think that his conduct, in other respects, was strongly illustrative of a total absence not only of political sagacity but of common sense. It is said —he was still successful—he certainly was— but how often is success a false criterion to judge by? and, in this instance, it does not in the least exonerate him from the charge of the most irrational temerity. I insist, and I ever will insist, that Buonaparté, who, by some little moderation and management, might possibly have peaceably established himself on the throne of France, betrayed the most egregious want of judgment by the measures which he adopted. He, in the first instance, wantonly provoked the renewal of war, and he embarked in it with a desperation which could only be equalled by the folly of the experiment.

One of the leading motives by which, in the outset, he was evidently instigated, was to give employment to his troops, and to create a pretence for calling them from the coast and neighbourhood of Boulogne, where they were beginning to shew strong symptoms of dissatisfaction, and to treat with becoming levity and ridicule his empty gasconades against this country. This plan being resolved on, he has certainly the merit of having transported, in so short a space of time, so large an army from the northern coast of France to the heart of the German empire. On the elector of Bavaria he could perhaps depend; but, could he, in the most ardent moment of expectation, have conceived the disasters which befel the Austrians at Ulm? Could he have imagined, that a body of eighty thousand disciplined soldiers, would be vanquished without a struggle? Even after this fine army, by the imprudence of its officers, had allowed itself to be surrounded, was it to be conceived, that they would remain inactive, and lay down their arms without an effort to avoid disgrace, by a glorious death or a successful retreat? Had any other officer, but

he

he in whom such unworthy confidence was reposed, been entrusted with the command, when the mistake was perceived which suffered the French troops to get between the Austrians and the Russians, would he not have gallantly placed himself at the head of his men, and, sword in hand, have cut his way through the opposing ranks? Many individuals would have perished, but his army would have been saved.

After this unfortunate affair, little impediment presented itself between Ulm and the gates of Vienna. But here a formidable opposition was again to be expected. Every thing seemed to render it certain: the loyalty of the inhabitants, the valour of the troops, the stake that was at issue, the preparations that had been made. It was never intended that Vienna should stand a regular siege, to enable it to do which, it would have been necessary to raze the suburbs, a measure which would have occasioned infinitely greater calamity than any that could be apprehended from the temporary rage and cupidity of a foreign force. But it was resolved to retard the approach of the enemy by the destruction of the bridge

over the Danube. To this effect the most positive orders were given to prince Auersberg, who commanded the garrison. The mines were consequently laid: the match was in readiness to be applied. But this officer, instead of performing his duty, and obeying his instructions, allowed himself to be imposed upon by the duplicity of Murat, who, coming into the town under the protection of a flag of truce, solemnly assured him that an armistice had been agreed on between the contending armies. The trick succeeded, the Austrian was duped, the critical moment was lost, and the French got possession of the city.* Thus was another essential advantage neglected; for had the bridge been destroyed, it would have delayed the progress of the French troops at least four days, which was all that was wanting to enable the first and second division of the Russian army to form a junction. Buonaparté, pursuing his fortune, pressed forward into Moravia, and induced his opponents to risk a general action. Here again an unac-

* It is a singular fact, that during the time which Vienna remained in the hands of the French, Buonaparté never ventured within its walls.

countable

countable act of imprudence was committed by the allies, which no efforts of bravery could repair. The young and inexperienced emperor of Russia, who had never seen troops engaged, incited by his generous spirit, took the command of his own army, and by those fatal errors which a skilful general would have avoided, the French obtained an easy but decisive victory.

But great as these misfortunes were, every thing was yet to be remedied, had the emperor of Germany possessed that firmness which was suitable to the dignity of his exalted station, and to the gallant exploits of his illustrious house. His honour was still entire; he had still dominions to retreat to; he had still loyal and brave subjects to defend him. He had the examples of Francis I., of Ferdinand II., of Charles XII., of Frederic the Great, before him; and, had he reflected, they might have taught him, that any reverse was preferable to the ignominy of such an act of accommodation as that of Presburg. Had a little more vigour and resolution been displayed, the chances of relief still balanced in his favour. Buonaparté was in the heart of an enemy's country, separated

separated by an immense distance from his domestic resources, entirely at the mercy of the king of Prussia, who had already shewn a decided alienation, and the arch-duke Charles, the first general of the age, after a most masterly retreat, was advancing with a brave and unbroken army to his succour.

We thus see on how many slender props the fortune of Buonaparté reposed, if any one of which had given way, he was lost beyond the possibility of recovery. He, however, sternly discarded prudence, and, confiding in the power of his favourite idol, she rewarded him according to the extent of his devotion.

One should have thought, that after such unparalleled and unmerited prosperity; that after such extraordinary successes, so easily purchased, and so likely to be missed;* the most insatiate appetite for pride and power would have been gorged by absolute repletion.

*It is very remarkable, that the peace of Presburg was acquired by one battle, in which the French say they lost but a few hundred men. In the good times of Europe, such a victory as that of Austerlitz would, at most, have gained a town, perhaps only a few acres of land.

tion. But this minion of fortune, instead of being satisfied with a treaty which had reduced the power, and degraded the rank of the noblest house in Christendom, and laid so great a part of Europe breathless and impotent at his feet, what do we find to be his occupation on his return to France? Is he employed about the organization of finance, the revival of manufactures, the restoration of industry and commerce, the repeal of ruinous regulations, the enactment of wholesome laws?—No!—these avocations are too insignificant, too closely allied to the happiness of mankind, to engage his attention. Plans of misery and extermination are still brooding in his mind; dismemberment of kingdoms, subversion of empires, dethronement of sovereigns, establishment of confederacies, robbery of states, oppression of subjects; these are the lofty and pernicious topics of his contemplation.

The consequences of his lucubrations were soon made apparent. Some of the oldest and most respectable princes in Germany were indelibly disgraced, by being raised to titles by this blood-stained usurper. The king of Naples was exiled from his continental do-

minions, and his inheritance was bestowed on one of Buonaparté's worthless brothers. The once glorious republic of Holland was speedily destined to terminate its political existence by a similar act of degradation. The emperor of Germany, being disarmed, was selected as an object of further revenge, and, having been stripped of his power, his title fell an easy prey. Even the king of Prussia, to whom Buonaparté was under such signal obligations, being no longer useful, was treated with the most aggravating contempt. Other abuses, as considerable as those which we have already witnessed, are evidently hatching in the brain of this fell destroyer. Switzerland is still without a king; Spain and Turkey are tottering; Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark are insecure; Asia, Africa, and America are unexplored; and, no doubt, Russia and England are within the boundary of his speculations.

Under such circumstances, what is to be done? Let me simply ask, Is any confidence to be placed in the faith of such a man, or can there be any hope of security or salvation but in war?

People immediately exclaim: Is then this

war

war to be eternal? By no means.—But as long as Buonaparté lives, that is, as long as his political life endures, unless his ambition be corrected and confined by a material diminution of his power and success, and by the consequent dissolution of all his dependent governments, and the deposition of all his mushroom kings, I cannot conceive any possible result from peace, but injury and insult, leading inevitably, in the course of a few months, to aggravated hostility.

If there were any chance of the durability of peace, even if it could not be obtained without considerable sacrifices, I should be among its warmest advocates; because I should then contemplate at no distant date, the subversion of Buonaparté's sway. Having founded a military government on the wrecks of civil liberty and domestic happiness, he can only support it by an innumerable armed force, which armed force can only be kept in subordination by the occupations which stimulate its activity, and the privileges and plunder which reward its toils. These pursuits and inducements withdrawn, the weapon which has been raised for his defence would recoil on its author, and be turned to

his destruction. However, therefore, he may be desirous of a short cessation of hostilities, the better to arrange his future projects, he has proceeded too far in the career of atrocious ambition to stop, and war would to a certainty return, the moment it suited his purpose.

Has not this been the uniform consequence of every peace which has been concluded? His restless and arrogant disposition grasps at universal controul. When states have been sufficiently weak, he has compelled them, without ceremony, to join with him in league, that they might administer to his wants by their own impoverishment, and flatter his vanity by their own degradation. When they have been too strong for this kind of irksome discipline, in the hope of reducing them to the proper standard, he has, by unremitting insult and aggression, again forced them to take up arms. We have, ourselves, hazarded an experimental peace, highly advantageous to France, and productive to us of nothing but danger, disgrace, and expence. But if we suffered materially from our last act of pacification; if with all the reluctance of the government of the country to resume hostilities, they

were

were not then to be avoided; what fair prospect of better success can we figure to ourselves at this moment? Has any radical change in the character of this usurper taken place. so as to warrant us to frame such an opinion, or to cherish such hopes? Has he discovered less ambition, less arrogance, less cruelty, less injustice? Have the execrations of mankind penetrated to his heart, and awakened there any feelings of shame, or honour, or remorse? Has he betrayed any signs of contrition for past enormities? Has he shewn any desire to atone for the innumerable crimes which he has committed, for the torrents of blood which he has shed, for the mighty mischiefs which he has occasioned, for the dreadful calamities with which he has afflicted the living generation? On the contrary, does not every act of his life bespeak a more rooted habit of wickedness, a more sovereign contempt for the just prejudices of mankind, a more determined resolution to coerce obedience, a more extended sphere of barbarous and intolerant ambition? Is then the public law of Europe to be annulled by the mere mandates of this turbulent upstart? Are the dismissal of

hereditary kings from their thrones, and the elevation of base-born scoundrels to their stations, to be regarded as occurrences, no longer entitled to resistance or notice? Are the dissolutions of old governments to be supplanted by the daily innovations of caprice, and the continent of Europe to be bound in the fetters of military despotism, without remonstrance or murmur? Is every corner of the earth to be ransacked for proscribed individuals to feed the voracity, and, as far as human life can effect it, to glut the base revenge and sanguinary cruelty of this outrageous assassin? The question is—Is all this to be tamely endured, or valiantly resisted?

Buonaparté has at length so far revealed the execrable atrocity of his character,—that every vice and crime, which have hitherto been committed by man, have been perpetrated by him; not by chance, not from necessity, but from gratuitous depravity and wantonness. No mask can any longer cover his hideous deformities; but all that suffering humanity can dread from the snares of perfidy, the contrivances of meanness, the chains of tyranny, the exac-

tions

tions of avarice, or the tortures of cruelty, may be expected as the matured fruits of his domination. Beyond his present destructive limits he cannot well go. With all his ingenuity, he must nearly have exhausted variety, and can scarcely deviate into a new crime.

A man who acquires an ascendancy over others in the same rank of life, whose ambition is equally aspiring, and whose designs are equally adventurous, must, undoubtedly, be distinguished by some qualities in which the others are deficient, and to which his superior success is attributable. But when I hear people prostituting the epithet of *great* in its application to Buonaparté, I confess that I feel a mixture of horror and indignation which no language can communicate. That Buonaparté is an extraordinary man, I admit:—that his fortune has been far beyond every example which the history of mankind has unfolded, I allow: but that there is any one ingredient in his character, which entitles him to the distinguishing appellation of *great*, I totally deny. A truly great man is brave, generous, humane, magnanimous, and just; temperate,

and

and mild in prosperity; in adversity firm and undaunted; accomplishing his purpose with the least possible mischief; mindful of benefits; forgetful of injuries—moderate even in the midst of conquest; and the moment an enemy is subdued, extending to him the protection of a friend. If this portrait of greatness be correct, need I add that Bonaparté, in every prominent feature of his character, is the exact reverse. Bloodthirsty, tyrannical, treacherous, revengeful, capricious, ungovernable in his rage, implacable in his resentment; and these unruly passions not unfrequently disgraced and disfigured by all that is contemptible in thought, and ridiculous in action. This *imperial* man can buffet, and fret, and storm and abuse, and, in the workings of his infuriated temper, can hack and gash chairs with penknives, tear dispatches, kick his attendants, and break tables and windows by corporal exertion*. This is what he can do in his cabinet, and were he there confined, his mischief would not exceed that of many other maniacs. But when such a de-

* These are literal facts, of which any one who visits his apartment, in the Thuilleries, may be convinced.

mon

mon is invested with absolute power; when he is provided with the resources of an immense empire; when he has 600,000 men in arms, and at his disposal to execute his licentious decrees; when he can prowl about unhurt in quest of prey; and fix upon any victim, within the range of his domination, which his pampered appetite chuses to select; the fate of those who are exposed to his fury is so truly deplorable, the danger of tolerating such excesses is so eminently perilous, that no rational being can pretend to say that resistance to such a ministration is not among the most sacred duties of human action.*

There

* There is a baseness of spirit in the conduct of this man, that is perfectly unintelligible. To the softer emotions, his breast is innaccessible. He wars with human nature: he deals in promiscuous wickedness. Nothing can disarm his vengeance, or assuage his malice. Neither sex nor age is sheltered from his fury, and to the supplications of innocence, or the tears of beauty, he is equally inexorable. The arrest and barbarous treatment of Mrs. Spencer Smith, a few months back, merely because she was the wife and sister of two English gentlemen who have the honour of having excited his hatred, have shewn the extent of his persecution. Even the common courtesy of a gentleman is totally unknown to him. When Mr. Fox,

There is indeed one consolatory reflection, amid all this misery, that little worse can happen, and that a change for the better may be rationally expected. Hitherto, most of those who distinguished themselves in the various revolutions of government which France has undergone, have either been delivered up to public justice; or have perished miserably by an assassin's hand; or have sunk into an insignificance more intolerable to such minds than the most fatal catastrophe. Is it then to be supposed, that Buonaparté will alone escape? Reiterated crimes of the monstrous nature of those which he has, for many years past, been in the habit of committing, must at length rouse even the instruments of his guilt to an apprehension of danger and a spirit of resistance. A tyrant who destroys not only without distinction and remorse, but who, banqueting on the sufferings of mankind,

not long before his death, personally applied to him for the release of three or four friends, among the number of those who have been so long and so unjustly detained in France, he peremptorily refused. If the request had been made by some clerk in office, or any other person of as little consequence, it would have stood a better chance of success.

destroys

destroys from the love of destruction, must eventually alarm the fears, and shake the fidelity, of his most confidential friends. They must shudder at every variation of his temper, and must be hourly in dread of falling victims to their servility.

But if the disaffection of those who surround his person, who fatten in his favour, and are partakers of his spoils, be likely to be excited; if they be likely to relax in devotion, and to kindle into enmity, what must be the feelings of the bulk of the people towards a tyrant, who, having wheedled them into obedience, shortly after completely crushed them with weapons with which they had entrusted him for their defence; who has cut off even the hope of amelioration; and who has left them nothing to expect from his government but the wretchedness of despair, and the ignominy of submission?

We have been so often disappointed in our conclusions respecting the internal state of France, drawn from the natural progress of affairs; the apparently approaching crisis has been so often averted; that pictures, however faithful, of domestic distress, as far at least as they apply to the dissolution of

the government, are surveyed with little interest. Effects however are sometimes silently working their way; and the accomplishment of an end is not unfrequently secured when it is least thought of by the spectators. The success of any sudden effort in the interior, at this moment, I should certainly distrust; but the conviction of ruin, and the hopelessness of redress, as long as the usurpation of this man continues, are spreading through the mass of society, not only in France but in Europe, and fastening on their recollections in a manner which must sooner or later produce a general insurrection.

When Buonaparté first overset the directory, he was an object of popularity in France, because he destroyed a usurped power, which had been a source of infinite misery to the country. But when he disclosed the motive and views by which he had been actuated, by securing to himself that authority of which he had deprived others, suspicion became active, and dislike was speedily generated. When he seized the throne, the odium and distrust which his previous conduct had excited, even still further

further increased, because every one foresaw, in that daring act, the revival of all the expence, intrigue, dissipation, and tyranny of the old court, without any of its substantial elegance, or dignity, or virtue. His success and his triumphs, and above all his armies, have hitherto stifled the public voice, but he plainly reads in their silence the measure of their hate*.

It is in vain that Buonaparté publishes his monthly statements, in which he would persuade the people of France of the benefits which his government confers, and of the happiness and prosperity which they enjoy. These are aggravating insults, or at best but

* Such is the utter abhorrence and detestation in which Buonaparté has been long held in France, that, at his coronation, the public places, which were thrown open at the expence of the government, were unfrequented, except by the lowest rabble, and the most mournful silence every where prevailed. When he led his armies into Germany last year, every one was praying for his defeat, as the only hope of escaping from his despotism, and, when they heard of his success, they regarded it as a most dire misfortune. On his return to Paris, pieces were introduced at the theatres, in the view of celebrating his victories, and awakening the public mind to an interest in his fame, but not one approving voice disturbed the sarcastic contempt with which they were listened to.

useless

useless speculations, when addressed to those who are reasoning from their sufferings, and whose experience demonstrates their falsehood. They feel that he is enforcing a government and a police which have not left to any individual of France a shadow of personal freedom, and that his restless vanity and ambition are involving them in the most extravagant expences, exposing them to the most bitter calamities, and exhausting them by the most unnatural exertions. Of what consequence to France, properly speaking, are the triumphs of Buonaparté? Has she become morally happier, or politically stronger, by his numerous acquisitions? She may perhaps be able to produce, at the moment, a more powerful impression; but is her permanent strength or happiness increased? France, confined within her ancient and natural limits, was surely sufficiently extensive and populous for every purpose of civil or political government, whether of internal prosperity, or external security. A life and vigour were circulating through every province, and benefiting every member of the community. Letters and arts were protected; commerce and manu-

factures flourished; industry and ingenuity were certain sources of wealth, which being acquired, was again distributed through the remotest parts of the empire; and the government, although despotic, felt an interest in the moderate exercise of its power, in the encouragement of labour, the patronage of merit, and the recompence of skill.

What is the case now? A low-bred usurper has supplanted a legitimate king; every citizen of France is not only a slave, but is made to feel the weight of his chains; soldiers, raised by forced conscriptions, are dragged from the bosom of their families, that they may be converted into instruments for the preservation of ruinous conquests, the protection of domestic inquisition, and the maintenance of the most galling despotism; commerce and the arts are fast declining; and all freedom of discussion is so totally at an end, that the extinction of the sciences must speedily follow. That kind and degree of industry, which are necessary for the cultivation of the land, still exist; and the produce of the soil is still sufficient to supply the wants of the people. But

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even agriculture is on the decay, and must further suffer; for such is the scarcity of specie, from the total stagnation of trade, and the enormous contributions which are necessary to meet the expenditure of the state, that the proprietors of land can no longer find a market for their commodities. Their returns, indeed, in consequence of this deficiency of a circulating medium, have diminished in so alarming a proportion, that the expences of cultivation are no longer defrayed. The finances, at the same time, are in a state of total derangement, and the public revenue, notwithstanding all the spoliations which have been wrung from foreign states, and the burdensome taxes which crush the interior, is so completely inadequate to the enormous prodigality of Buonaparté's government, that nothing short of another national bankruptcy can insure even a temporary relief. The most productive provinces of France have already delivered in a declaration, stating their absolute inability any longer to pay the taxes in specie. They acknowledge, that they have corn, and wine, and oil, in abundance; but there is no possibility of exchanging these productions

ductions (beyond what is requisite for the support of life) for money: they must, therefore, in future contribute in kind. The shopkeepers also have plenty of goods, but there is no demand for them. Even French gaiety and frivolity are yielding to the necessity of the times; carriages in Paris are rarely seen; parties are no longer given; and the theatres and other places of public amusement are thinly attended. The fact is, that the wealth of the country is in the hands of a plebeian court, and a set of upstart contractors and peculators, who are distinguished by the epithet of the *nouveaux riches*. These revolutionary *productions* revel in an excess of splendour, luxury, and dissipation, and squander their ill-gotten wealth in the propagation and encouragement of every description of licentious vice. The state of morals (particularly in the capital) I shall not attempt to describe. I shall only say, that the corruption is universal, and so familiarised are the feelings of the people become to every excess of debauch, and to every extravagance of debased and perverted nature, that acts, the bare recital of which used to create horror, are now con-

templated in practice, without the slightest emotion.

Whilst all this is going on in France, and secretly producing its own correction, we find formidable manifestations of resistance once more springing up on the continent. The memorable campaign of last year had scarcely been brought to a conclusion, when Buonaparté retired to his closet to prepare new plans, which were intended to confirm his ascendancy by disarming every faculty of opposition. After the reverses and humiliations which Austria had so recently experienced, nothing that he could do, he was convinced, would, at the moment, induce her to renew the war. Hence his base determination to degrade her far beyond the limits prescribed by the treaty of Presburg. Hence his motive in retaining and strengthening Braunau; in concerting the confederacy of the Rhine, which gave a mortal blow to the Germanic constitution; and, shortly after, in compelling the emperor to abdicate the loftiest title in Europe.

These numerous and daring encroachments and innovations, which revealed to the most blind the ultimate object of Buonaparté's

Buonaparté's views, at length gave serious alarm to the court of Berlin. The dragon which had been so long lulled and pacified by the cakes and possets of state empiricism, was at last roused to a perception of interest, a sense of danger, and a desire of revenge. It was now demonstrated that it was not only the south of Germany, involving in its fate the destruction of the house of Austria, and the total subjugation of all the inferior princes, which could satisfy the desires of the ruler of France; but that his aim extended to the ruin of the northern states, and that the league which he had formed was to be the instrument by which what he further meditated was to be carried into effect. Short-sighted, inert, and inglorious as Prussia had long been, something now presented itself that was too palpably striking to allow her slumbers to be protracted. Her self-preservation was immediately concerned, and she at last began to make some exertion to avert the impending peril. With what force must the errours of past conduct have now burst upon the mind of the Prussian monarch! With how just a comprehension must he now have surveyed the fruits which

the lamentable weakness and folly of the few last years of his government, particularly of the last, had produced! When Buonaparté was advancing towards Vienna, how easily might the military force of Prussia have terminated his career, and have averted the mischief which was in a great measure produced by her inactivity!

There was however now no time for repentance or reflection, or even for the temporizing arts of diplomatic ingenuity. So unaccountably remiss had Prussia been in foreseeing the events which were about to take place, that the danger was at her door before the perception of it agitated her; and the greatest activity was requisite to preserve her from the fate of her imperial neighbour. Her only object was—an object on which her very salvation depended—by a northern confederacy, to countervail the disastrous effects of that which had been completed in the south under the immediate tuition and patronage of Buonaparté. The king of Prussia was anxious, therefore, to exert that influence which naturally appertained to him as the chief potentate in the north of Germany; and he invited the elector of Saxony,

towns,

the prince of Hesse, and the Hanseatic towns, to form a federal union under his auspices, for the preservation of their political independence against the designs or aggresions of any foreign power.*

Associations of this description have been authorized at all periods of the political history of modern Europe, and the one in question was rendered most urgently requisite from the peculiar circumstances in which it was implicated. Interfering however with Buonaparté's views of aggrandisement, it was considered in his eyes as a most offensive measure, and he accordingly resolved to obstruct its fulfilment. Having failed by menaces, the irritation of his temper soon pushed him to extremities. He has already quitted Paris for the purpose of marshalling his armies, which, to answer the purposes of his ambition, have never been withdrawn

* This confederacy has, I make no doubt, been tacitly subscribed to. The prince of Hesse may find it prudent, at this critical moment, to observe the strictest neutrality, but should the opportunity present itself, he, with some others, will not delay to act. He has 25,000 excellent soldiers at his command.

from

from the heart of Germany, and he is again preparing to involve Europe in all the distractions and horrors of war.*

Such has hitherto been the uninterrupted course of his fortune, that the guidance of those measures of discretion and forbearance, which usually determine the actions of other men, are unacknowledged by him. When he commands, he expects implicit obedience; and any question about his right, or resistance to his authority, is regarded as an act of contumacious folly, necessarily incurring the degree of chastisement which he thinks proper to inflict. Crowns are disposed of by a decree, and people are transferred from the rule of an illustrious dynasty to the despotic sway of any base-born vagabond whom he deigns to appoint. The facility with which he has reduced to practice these extravagant whims, has certainly (as far as the mere act is concerned) in some degree seemed to war-

* In Buonaparté's curious letter to the elector of Bavaria, he talks in his usual high tone, and says that he will not suffer Prussia to league with Hesse, Saxony, or the Hanseatic towns. This letter is dated from St. Cloud the 21st September. On the 28th he was at Mentz.

rant

rant the experiment; but I feel as confident as that I am now writing, that the day of retribution will arrive, and that all this disgusting history, which we cannot reconcile to reason, and which we can scarcely reconcile to truth, will be corrected and reversed. It is not possible that mankind can for ever continue besotted and imbruted to such a degree, as to allow themselves to be thus trampled on; as to tolerate the measure of their present miseries; as to suffer this ferocious family to occupy the thrones of their lawful kings. The love of liberty, the love of honour, the love of virtue, is implanted by nature in the breast of man. These principles, when strengthened by culture and habit, can never after be eradicated; and although, from mistaken notions, they may, for a time, be directed towards unworthy objects of affection, judgment must at length rectify error, and early attachments must inevitably return. Wherever the members of this detested family have been delegated; wherever their base and malignant passions have been excited; all the glowing illusions which had been previously conjured up, have speedily vanished, and the curses

of mankind have uniformly attended them. Fatal experience has totally reversed the imaginary benefits which were expected, and for the loss of a native and hereditary monarch, they find themselves delivered over to the grasp of a needy and profligate adventurer, who, uncertain how long his fortune may endure, makes the most of his precarious property, and shares it among adherents as rapacious as himself. I can conceive nothing in the lot of humanity so truly calamitous as that of the miserable people, whose fate, by their own supineness and credulity, has been resigned to the mercy of so infamous a usurpation.

But Buonaparté, with all his terrific power, will not probably be able to dissolve the league which is again starting into existence. It is in my mind, though not perhaps apparently, yet substantially, likely to be far more formidable than that which threatened the overthrow of his dominion at the commencement of the preceding year. At least Europe is better acquainted with the intrinsic merits of his character, and less disposed to be again duped by his treacherous professions. Nor is it to be sup-

posed

posed that the same fatal errors will be again committed. He will not have the impolitic indecision of the king of Prussia, nor the cowardly incapacity of Mack, nor the magnanimous inexperience of the Russian emperor, to assist him; and if Austria take a part, the vacillating mind of Francis II. will be personally sustained by the counsels and military skill of his illustrious brother.*

The situation of Buonaparté is also infinitely more hazardous on another account. Whilst Austria maintained her pre-eminence as the acknowledged head of the German empire, from a natural rivality between the houses of Lorraine and Brandenburg, it was no difficult matter to foster jealousy and

* Austria is evidently making great preparations, and assembling formidable armies in Bohemia and Upper Austria. Weakened as she apparently is by her last campaign, she has some advantages to balance her losses. Not having so extensive a line of frontier, or such distant provinces to defend, she is in possession of a greater disposable force, and can more easily concentrate her troops. The provinces which have been wrested from her, particularly the Tyrol, are ripe for revolt. To the house of Lorraine the Tyrolese are unalterably attached, and are indignant at the thought of French or Bavarian domination.

stimulate hope in the breast of the Prussian monarch. Unfortunately for Europe, as long as Austria stood in safety, he was never actuated in his views by considerations of an enlarged and liberal system of policy. But now that the strength of Austria has so sensibly declined, and the danger which awaits Prussia, by the removal of this grand impediment to Buonaparté's ambition, is so evidently revealed, a sense of self-preservation, as well as a consciousness of superiority, unite Prussia to the fortunes of Austria against a common foe. Prussia, therefore, which was before friendly to France, is now become the principal coadjutor against her; and, in conjunction with Saxony, Sweden, and Russia, is about to contend once more for the deliverance of Europe.

There is also this circumstance in favour of our conjectures of eventual success on the part of the king of Prussia, that he has not proceeded to extremities till he had exhausted every mode of conciliation, till endless provocation had completely inflamed the enthusiastic indignation of his people, and till he was on the point of falling a

victim

victim to inactivity. His army is moreover impelled by the most powerful incentives which can actuate the mind of man to a discharge of duty, in the recollection of past fame, and the preservation of political independence. Buonaparté will, no doubt, endeavour to distract the allies, by attempting to excite a rebellion in Poland, and by sowing the seeds of dissension between the Russians and Turks. But, however he may partially succeed in those quarters, he can no longer impose on the nations that have felt his power. The unfounded rumours which he so industriously circulated through the medium of a venal press, and which produced, at the moment, so potent a diversion in his favour, can no longer mislead the gross credulity of his disciples. Their practical sufferings have, long since, expunged the fanciful pictures which his seductive colouring had traced, and he may now disseminate his infamous calumnies without adding to the number of his proselytes.* Much has been lost to the allies by

* It is inconceivable what a destructive influence the periodical papers which were issued, and spread through

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by the uncontradicted manner in which he was permitted to propagate invented stories to their prejudice, and, in an inverted strain, to panegyrise the justice and mildness of his own government. The extent of his rule has falsified his assertions, and evinced the baseness of his views, and the inanity of the expectations of his votaries. Those German philosophers, who have been, for so many years, plodding over the solution of theorems on government, and diving into the absurdest speculations on religion and morals; who have been vainly promising to themselves so many advantages from the various revolutions in which they have so materially assisted, must now dismiss their perilous researches, and be guided by the sure, but modest light of past experience. They must now quit those dangerous labyrinths in which they have so long been entangled, and return to the in-

the Continent by Buonaparté's creatures, produced. The universal thirst for knowledge, unguided by judgment, which prevails, particularly among the Germans, disposed them to believe what they read; and the cause of England, suffered as it was to remain without a literary champion, the grossest and most scandalous falsehoods were currently received as truth.

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vestigation of truth through the paths of reason.

But how, it will be asked, are we to hope for any thing like freedom of expression on the Continent, whilst Buonaparté's authority is allowed to extend in every direction, and the magnanimous assertor of truth is torn by hired ruffians from the protection of his country's laws, and consigned without trial to an ignominious death? His headstrong passions seem, however, in the instance to which I allude, to have propelled him to surpass most of his other acts of brutal indiscretion; and the fate of a Nuremberg bookseller has augmented the number of his enemies more, perhaps, than any other individual murder, whether of Toussaint, the duke D'Enghien*, general Pichegru, or captain Wright. The freedom

* Shortly after the mock trial, and subsequent murder of this amiable and gallant prince, a caricature was exhibited at a print-shop in Paris, in which was represented the headless trunk of the duc D'Enghien throwing out a stream of blood on Buonaparté and his two *royal* brothers, who were standing opposite, and feasting their eyes on the remains of their illustrious victim. Underneath was written, *Voilà les princes du sang d'Enghien.* A severity of satirical truth which, it may be believed, neither escaped notice nor punishment,

of

of the press is one of those privileges so deeply interesting to human nature; it is one of those possessions to which civilized man is so entirely attached, as the most energetic instrument with which he can be entrusted for the preservation of every enjoyment derived from the nature and constitution of the social union, that he who attempts to suppress it, invokes to arms every advocate for liberty, and every friend to virtue. As it was designed by Providence that the soul should govern the body, so, in a free state, is the pen more powerful than the sword. When, therefore, all enquiry is stifled, and all information prohibited, reason is subdued; the order of nature is reversed; and corporal strength triumphs over mental debility. Hence is derived the perpetuation of tyranny, which can only be insured by crushing the vigour of the mind. Buonaparté feels this, and has acted accordingly. But mankind is too enlightened to be so constrained: genius will break asunder the stoutest chains which despotism can forge, and he who thus attempts to fortify himself, must inevitably perish.

Much will depend on the first engagement

ment that is fought between the French and Prussian troops. The latter must labour, in the outset, under considerable disadvantages. They have long been accustomed to repose, and are fatigued by the activity which they have lately been obliged to exert. The French, on the contrary, have been inured to the hardships of war, and are elated by the frequency of victory; and, in whatever part of Germany they have been quartered, they have lived on the fertility of the land. Their numbers are also superior. Should, however, the Prussians be, at the commencement, unsuccessful, they are not likely to be dismayed. They are aware of the value of the stake for which they are contending; and such is the altered feeling and sentiment of the Continent, that another surrender of Ulm, or battle of Austerlitz, can scarcely occur. If, therefore, they should, in their first encounter, sustain some loss, we are not to imagine that they will abandon the hope of recovery. They will rally again and again, nor will they submit to the extinction of their monarchy but with the extinction of life. Would that the mighty genius of Frederic

were present to animate and direct their exertions! But his glorious career is before their eyes, and the history of his illustrious reign will not be without its use.

In the mean time the Russians will be approaching, and will eventually afford to Prussia a most efficacious aid*. The emperor Alexander's declaration is, both in point of composition and energy, one of the finest state papers that has ever been published†. It displays moderation blended with firmness; a love of peace only yielding to the

* A Russian army of 80,000 men, under the command of prince Bagrathion, generals Kutusow, Kamenskoi, and Michelson, is advancing. I do not however look to their junction with the Prussians as an event so near at hand as the desires of people so generally lead them to expect. The Russians carry with them a great deal of baggage and a great train of artillery. The country through which they have to pass is far from being in a cultivated state, and the roads are deplorable. These are difficulties which must, in spite of their exertions, considerably retard their march.

† The Russian manifesto is dated August 30. The reply of the senate is an honourable expression of their feeling and zeal. It appears that the emperor of Russia, as the conditions of peace, among other objects, insisted on a compensation to his Sardinian majesty, the entire preservation of the Sicilian territory, and the withdrawing of the French troops from Germany.

inviolability

inviolability of national faith; a determination to defend the honour and support the interests of his country and his allies; and an unshaken reliance, derived from the justice of his cause, on the protection of Providence*. How will his brave soldiers

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* The various declarations and manifestoes which have recently been issued, disclose a scene of diplomatic villainy, on the part of the French government, such as was never before exhibited to the indignation of mankind. These important documents (particularly that published by Prussia) contain a detailed history of an unbroken chain of the most base and the most perfidious transactions. Wickedness and hypocrisy, although they are made to act in concert, seem throughout to be contending for the superiority. They both exert the utmost latitude of their baneful powers. A few months after the ratification of the treaty of Presburg, every one of its most material provisions was notoriously violated by the Rhenish confederacy, which was formed under the immediate tutelage of Buonaparté. By this sweeping act, the venerable pile of the Germanic constitution, which had stood for so many ages; which had been so beneficial to the political interests of the civilized world; and which had been so lately guarantied by the chief continental powers, was totally demolished. The emperor of the Romans was stripped of his proudest title, and the German princes, who were absolved from their allegiance, or who were rather torn from their natural protector, were delivered over to the abject vassalage of a cruel and vindictive foreigner. Whilst

pant to grapple with their adversaries, and to regain those laurels which were, a year ago, torn from their brows! Nor will the activity and heroic example of the king of Sweden be without its stimulating influence; a monarch who, throughout the revolution, has shone forth a brilliant exception from his continental compeers, and who, by his magnanimous conduct, has preserved his dominions untouched, and his honour unim-

Buonaparté was planning his new federal union, by way of opiate to the growing suspicions of Prussia, he recommended her to form a similar political association in the North. Whilst urging Prussia to adopt this measure, he was tampering with the prince of Hesse, who was to be one of the principals in the Prussian confederacy, and endeavouring to separate him altogether from the connexion, by offering to him the remaining territory of the prince of Orange, whom he, at the same moment, was binding himself with the king of Prussia to protect. In like manner, he was stimulating Russia to defend the king of Sweden's German dominions, and persuading Prussia to deprive him of them. He was also compelling Prussia finally to incorporate Hanover, and agreeing with Great Britain that its restoration should be one of the bases of negociation. The great object of Buonaparté has ever been to lull the continental states into a deceitful security, whilst he was embroiling them in endless hostility with each other, by a collision of interests, and laying toils for their irremediable ruin.

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peached. With what noble contempt has he uniformly treated the upstart Corsican! Conscious of his illustrious descent, and of reigning over a brave and free people, he has still preferred his honour to his crown. Knowing how to draw the line of distinction between a legitimate king and an illegitimate tyrant, he has never allowed himself to be degraded by any friendly intercourse, by the reception of disgraceful badges, or by acts of disgraceful courtesy. He has throughout the dreadful contest by which Europe has been assailed, and which has often threatened to extend to his own dominions, displayed a sense of generous pride and manly dignity, which must insure to him the lasting admiration and gratitude of mankind. How glorious does his conduct appear contrasted with the abject spirit of those princes who have been accepting titles and dignities from Buonaparté's bounty, and have even connected themselves in matrimonial alliance with his plebeian blood!

When turning from the anxious and awful scene which is about to open on the continent, to which every generous mind must be tremblingly alive, we contemplate the

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conspicuous eminence on which this country has, by its virtues, been placed, how must the heart of every Briton glow to think that he is a member of this illustrious community! Whether we survey the past, or anticipate the future; on whichever side we fix our eyes; we are rewarded by all that is gratifying to pride, or beneficial to interest; by the laurels of fame, the confidence of security, and the consolation of hope. A war carried on with all the malevolence of revenge and fierceness of destruction, which (with the intermission of little more than a twelvemonth's truce) has now lasted for fourteen years, has only corroborated the proof of the complete incapability of our enemy to assail, with his exterminating hordes, this happy isle. Menaces have been uttered; vows have been made; troops and boats have been assembled; but to what purpose? The former to lie rotting in the bason of Boulogne—the latter to be marched off to a less perilous enterprize. All the lofty denunciations against the independence of this country, have evaporated in an ostentatious display of means, and a total inertness of action. How must Buonaparté

smart

smart under the lash of mortified pride and disappointed ambition; how must all the revengeful feelings of his nature be inflamed; how must he be goaded by all those base passions which are so congenial to his soul; when he reflects (and the reflection must be ever present to his thought) on his total inability to carry into the bosom of this opulent and peaceful land, his destructive weapons! How much more furious must be the the dominion of these sensations, when he contrasts with his own disappointments, the exuberance of our commerce and the triumphs of our arms; when he beholds us exhibiting to afflicted Europe an example every way worthy of our fortunes; and which, in the depth of her adversity, has irradiated the gloom of despair, and awakened the inspirations of hope!

Our naval victories have impressed such a tremendous lesson on the hearts of our enemies, that they have completely resigned to us the empire of the ocean. They are so overawed, that they regard all contention on that element, which is now peculiarly our own, as totally fruitless, and their maritime exertions are confined to the predatory ex-

peditions of a few light squadrons. Although the immortal Nelson is no longer on earth to protect and avenge his country's cause, yet his genius is still watching over us. The benefits of his illustrious career, through the whole of which intrepidity and skill were struggling for the ascendancy, still survive, and his heroic example has transfused into the breast of every British sailor an emulation which must perpetuate success. Let then Jerome Buonaparté console himself with his petty plunder, and his fortunate escape, for which he has been so worthily rewarded;* and, whilst breathing out the history of his own exploits on the bosom of a royal consort,† let him contemplate, in distant perspective, the restoration of the regal crown of Jerusalem.

* From the last dispatches received from Sir Richard Strachan, it appears, that of Villeaumez's squadron, consisting of six sail of the line, only two have escaped. The French admiral's ship has just got into the Havannah—and Jerome Buonaparté, in the Veteran, reached a French port.

† It is confidently stated, that this worthy brother of Buonaparté, who is already married, is betrothed to the princess Catherine of Wirtemberg, and as soon as the espousals are solemnized, he is to be crowned king of the Jews.

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The repossession of the Cape of Good Hope was easily insured by the joint efforts of a small naval and military force, which has since, in another quarter of the globe, accomplished a still more important capture.

The establishment of a British colony on the eastern coast of South America, in a district distinguished for salubrity of climate and fertility of soil, and on the banks of a river which is navigable for several hundred miles, leaving us at liberty to penetrate into the heart of the richest provinces of the New World, opens to our view a field of profitable speculation, which, for novelty and extent, is equally important. When we consider how the energies of the vast empire which Spain has, for three centuries, held over this abundant portion of the globe, have been confined, and how its inhabitants have been oppressed, it is easy to conceive the ardour with which they must pant to be relieved from so intolerable a yoke. Buonaparté may fulminate his anathemas, and enforce his decrees, in those regions over which his power unfortunately extends; but the total fruitlessness of his endeavours to confine even the commercial genius of this country,

country, only tends to expose him to our derision and contempt. Such is the decided superiority of our arms, of our arts, of our honour, of our integrity, and of our wealth, that if one channel be partially closed, another is successfully explored. His efforts to distress our commerce, by which he expects to overset our finances, have hitherto led, on our part, to fresh experiments, which would not otherwise have been thought of, and which have enlarged its sphere, and confirmed its prosperity.

The value of British manufactures which have been already shipped to this new settlement, amounts to above a million sterling; and although the hopes of the numerous adventurers who have so zealously embarked, may be somewhat disappointed, yet these are evils which will speedily correct themselves, and a regular and increasing trade will be finally established. Buenos Ayres, under our paternal government, will soon become the chief mart of the western hemisphere, and, with proper regulations, may be rendered a channel through which our ingenious manufactures may be introduced and distributed over the whole of its

southern division. With all the obstacles which it was the policy of the Spanish government to throw in our way, the necessity was felt and acknowledged of admitting many of the manufactures of Great Britain. These articles, which no other country could supply, were numerous, and the consumption of them was considerable. After deducting the heavy expences to which they were subjected, a sufficient inducement was still left to the manufacturer and the merchant to engage in the concern. But now that these impediments are removed, the profits which formerly fell to the government and merchants of Spain will centre entirely among ourselves. When also neither the choice nor quantity of commodities is limited, and we have, at the same time, at our disposal, the entire management of encouraging or restraining duties, which will be made to operate according to the views which our domestic policy may suggest, the advantages appear inexhaustible.

The experiments of another daring adventurer*, whom the strange circumstances

* Miranda is said to have effected a landing at Coro, on the Spanish main.

of these eventful times have produced, may also be attended with important consequences, and oblige us to look on the Spanish dominion in those regions of the earth as on the eve of extinction.

Amidst all these awful revolutions which are going forward on the grand theatre of the world, and which are no doubt permitted by the inscrutable wisdom of Providence for some just and beneficial purpose, it is impossible to deny our commiseration to the unfortunate lot of Spain. That once free, that still gallant, generous, and honourable nation, exhibits a lamentable picture of the misery and debasement which must ever result from any connection with Buonaparté. How contemptuously has it been delivered up to every species of insult and extortion, which the domineering influence of usurped authority can inflict! In a very few years, a domestic and a foreign tyrant have, by their joint intrigues, contrived completely to subdue the spirit, and to exhaust the resources, of the state. Under their superintendance, the lofty fabric of Spanish grandeur has crumbled to its very foundations, and nothing remains to remind

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us of its ancient splendour, but the magnitude of its ruins. Such have been the manifold and acute sufferings of Spain, that her people must long since have been convinced that nothing can exonerate them from their odious thraldom, but the revival of those moral virtues, by the absence of which every thing has been lost.

Holland too, whilst groaning under the affected clemency of an impudent usurpation, must survey her chains with increasing abhorrence. Since the elevation of Louis Buonaparté to the supreme authority, the misfortunes of the Dutch have been further aggravated. Liberty of speech has been totally suppressed, and their pockets have been completely drained.* Is the situation of Switzerland, or Brabant, or Italy, or Naples, less deplorable? In all these unhappy countries the keenest disgust and hatred must exist, and the very first considerable reverse which Buonaparté meets

* One of Louis's first acts was completely to silence the press, and his letter of the third of October to their *High Mightinesses* explains what measures he purposes adopting relative to finance.

with, will inevitably be the signal for universal revolt.

The brilliant exploits of our small, but gallant army in Calabria, assisted by the spirit of the people, have proved to the world that the French troops, so far from being invincible, cannot even stand against inferior numbers, when bravery and judgment combine in the attack. Our successes, in that quarter, have happened at a critical moment, and cannot fail to embarrass the plans of the enemy, and to inspire with fortitude and emulation the forces of the allies*. How glorious is it for the honour and fame, how gratifying to the laudable pride, of this country, not only to have persisted in its own defence; not only to have completely subdued the maritime strength of its enemies; not only to have carried on a most prosperous colonial war; but also to have been instrumental in rescuing from disgraceful servitude a continental kingdom, and in restoring to its rightful owner a part of the inheritance of the Bour-

* Buonaparté has already felt the necessity of sending considerable reinforcements.

bons!

bons! How the phantom of royalty, which has lately been set up at Naples as an object of idolatry, will flee from the just resentment that awaits him, should he loiter among his pretended subjects! They have been made intimately acquainted with the qualifications of the Buonapartés, and can, from the abandoned vices which have been exhibited to their astounded minds by one of the infamous fraternity, pretty accurately estimate the character of the head of the partnership.

It thus appears that a great part of Europe is once more on the eve of a general insurrection against the crimes, indignities, and usurpations, to which it has been for so many years exposed. All that is necessary to release it from this vexatious bondage, is firmness and unanimity. These two qualities once cemented, and the factitious strength of Buonaparté is dissolved. He has hitherto escaped, from the perverted ambition, or pusillanimous spirit, or discordant views, of his adversaries. But can these feelings everlastingly predominate? His power is great; but the fooleries which fed and invigorated the chief sources of his

fortune are on the decline. He may still coerce; he may still spread consternation and slaughter: yet his strength, like every thing else that is mortal, has limits, and he cannot alter the physical or moral constitution of man. Savage ignorance will submit to what it has been trained to endure: but men who have been once civilized cannot be forced back to a state of brutal apathy. Their talents, their passions, and their prejudices, which have operated in a certain sphere of expansion, will in that sphere continue to act; and the tyrant who denies them the enjoyment of accustomed privileges, will inevitably be an object of detestation and revenge. They will ever be on the watch to recover what they regard as their natural and unalienable rights, and whatever may be the appearance of acquiescence, they will never rest satisfied till they regain what they have lost. We must also hope, while humbly deprecating the divine wrath, that the vengeance with which it has pleased Providence to afflict the world, by allowing the most wicked of its inhabitants to deal out his judgments, is nearly appeased; and that the cause of

justice

justice and virtue will finally triumph over perfidious and tyrannical iniquity. Even in this world we frequently find, that the favour and bounty of the Supreme Being are ultimately made apparent in his dispensations; and I cannot help feeling confident that this monster has hitherto been suffered to riot in his profligate career, that he may at last be held up as a terrible example to future criminals. Towards this nation the mercy and protection of heaven have been most clearly manifested; and, great as our sins are, we have yet been permitted to reap the full advantage of those virtues by which we are distinguished. Had the other parts of Europe displayed the same firmness, the same courage, the same activity, the same perseverance, they would doubtless, in the same degree, have been recompensed, and the French revolution would have been long since counteracted. But, when no resistance is opposed, conquest is an easy achievement, and this is the simple history of Buonaparté's success.

I am therefore, for all the strong, and, I trust, unanswerable reasons, which I have enumerated, decidedly for the continuance of war: and if the efforts for its deliverance, which

which the Continent seems again resolved to risk, should again miscarry, I should still declare for war. In war, as long as the odious usurpation of Buonaparté continues, I see nothing but glory and security; in peace, I see nothing but danger and disgrace. If we make peace, even that kind of peace which, in the opinions of many men, would be a favourable one, can we avail ourselves of any of those advantages with which peace ought to be, and usually is, attended? Can we place any reliance on Buonaparté's assurances? Can we repose any confidence in his honour? Can we be morally certain that he will not, even within the space of a month after the signature of an accommodation, commit some egregious act of insult or aggression, that must instantly terminate in open hostility? Could we, under such circumstances, venture to disarm; to reduce our war establishment, or to repeal our war taxes? If, therefore, no one individual benefit can result to us from pacification, why attempt it? If we are to sustain all the inconvenience and expence of hostile preparation, why disable ourselves from annoying an enemy, whose inveteracy nothing can mollify, and

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who, through the feverish duration of a nominal peace, would only be enabled to exert it more detrimentally against us?

A temporary cessation from the hostile activity of Great Britain, is certainly an object of vast importance to Buonaparté; and he acted with his usual inconsistency in allowing the favourable opportunity to escape, which the late negotiation afforded him, of entering into terms of accommodation. When, after much previous intercourse, he solicited the government of this country, to send to Paris an accredited minister to arrange the differences which subsisted between us, he saw his interest in its true light, and, at one time, he shewed a desire to yield to those concessions which were best calculated to attain the accomplishment of his wishes. His haughty tone relaxed into the persuasive language of conciliation, and he feigned a spirit of frank sincerity, and moderated ambition. No further mention was made of the treaty of Amiens; but he expressed himself ready to submit to those kind of sacrifices, which this country would have appeared hardly justified in rejecting. Malta and the Cape were

to be ceded to us in perpetuity; our empire in India was no longer to be molested by French settlements; our commercial relations with the continent were to be revived, and the electorate of Hanover was to be restored to our king. Such, I have been informed, were the leading articles which were projected; such was the lure which was thrown out. These stipulations might probably have seduced the government and the country into a dangerous snare, had not the unbridled impetuosity and arrogance of Buonaparté's temper, suddenly interrupted the progress of all amicable adjustment. Like his seizure of Genoa during his negotiation last year with Russia, when he thought that Russia would brook any thing rather than break it off, he selected this inauspicious moment for the abdication of the emperor of Germany, from a similar persuasion that Mr. Fox was so resolved on peace, that a measure of this nature would occasion no alteration in his sentiments. Lord Lauderdale was, however, otherwise instructed, and when Buonaparté was informed that no farther aggressions would be permitted, and that the restoration of the

imperial

imperial title was insisted on, in one of those paroxysms of rage to which he is so frequently liable, the treaty, which only wanted the signatures, was torn to pieces.

Mr. Fox, whose return to power was the signal for a manly abandonment of all his violent opposition principles, and for the adoption of all those leading maxims on which his illustrious predecessor had so successfully conducted the government of the country, was also, I conceive, before his lamented death, beginning to change very materially in his opinions, respecting the policy of a revolutionary peace. The mildness and benignity of his nature, made him sincerely wish for a cessation of those miseries which are inseparable from a state of war. He desired peace from the same charitable motive which prompted him to desire the abolition of that iniquitous traffic in human animated flesh, the toleration of which has so long disgraced the statute-book. But his judgment, concerning peace, was, I imagine, rapidly rectifying the innate overflowings of his heart.

The happiness of mankind must ever be an object of solicitude with every enlighten-

ed mind; and, when their essential rights are immediately concerned, I am one of those who would boldly surrender every other interest. This kind of justice should be enforced independently of consequences; and, taking this proposition as a governing rule, I would abolish the slave-trade, if it were even to lead to the certain loss of our colonial pessessions, because I think that no collateral benefit can vindicate or excuse that exercise of barbarous tyranny on which their value is said to depend. On the same grounds, I would not make peace with France. Peace in the abstract, is a most desirable possession. But in weighing the question of peace and war between this country and France, many relative considerations of the highest moment must be taken into the account. In the instance before us, under the actual circumstances of Europe, a variety of arguments occur, which are inapplicable to the general enquiry, and which, after the present crisis, may never possibly apply again. We must ever bear in mind, that the question is not, whether one legitimate government shall bring to conclusion a malignant and protracted warfare with another legitimate government—

ment—but whether a great, high-minded, and an independent nation, shall condescend to acknowledge the authority of an unprincipled usurpation, when by such an acknowledgment, it not only sanctions all the crimes which have been committed, but, by a virtual expulsion of the rightful owner, it justifies, as far as its suffrage can justify, the claims of any adventurous villain to a throne. Now I, for one, readily confess, that I am so far wedded to the system of the old political school, that although as ardently attached to liberty as any man, and as friendly to every effort of justifiable ambition, I would rather submit to every evil with which fortune could overwhelm me, than be instrumental in the promotion of an act so at variance with my feelings as a Briton, and so totally unworthy of the honest fame of my country*.

* Although I never approved of the late negotiation with the French government, which was evidently entered into against the sense of the nation; yet, having engaged in it, I think we acted as sound politicians in continuing Lord Lauderdale at Paris as long as Buonaparté would suffer him to stay. The good understanding that was restored between us and the court of Berlin, was sufficient to

After all the clamours which at one time were industriously raised against the folly of embarking in war; after all the applauses which were so liberally bestowed on the revolutionary proceedings in France; after all the visionary calculations which were engaged in by the theorists of this country; we find that, whatever have been our burdens and privations in other respects, we have preserved our political independence and our civil constitution. Nor shall I be accused of estimating the value of these blessings too highly, when I declare that, if our burdens and privations were ten times as great, provided they led to the same security, we should have no reason to murmur. When we look to the cruel and humiliating sufferings of other communities that have ingloriously shrunk from the discharge of those sacred duties which have so signally distinguished us, what a field of triumph and self-gratulation presents itself! Our expences have been enormous, our sacrifices have been serious,

to prevent any misconstruction as to our motive, which must have been to gain as much time for Prussia as we could, and to delay as long as possible the blow which Buonaparté was meditating.

our exertions have been unparalleled, but our recompence has been commensurate. Our resources have, fortunately, kept peace with our exigencies, and the patient fortitude of the people has most cheerfully borne the measure of necessary endurance. They have perceived their interests, and have been throughout their misfortunes, steady to their purpose. They have generously entrusted to the executive power all the energies of which they are capable, and their confidence has not been abused. We have indeed been blessed with extraordinary aids, and such have been the extensive benefits secured to us by our naval superiority, that the commerce of the globe has been completely at our devotion.

Having done so much for our own glory and preservation, and for the salvation of the civilized world, let us not, after having proceeded so far, by any failure of constancy, relinquish the fruits of our efforts. Let us persevere in the animating object which presents itself to our just hopes. As long as we disdain to surrender, whatever may still be the hidden destiny of the continental nations, we shall hold out to them an example,

ample, which, whenever the occasion shall present itself, will stimulate their activity, and re-animate their scattered spirits. The end of all this barbarous injustice and confusion, must at length arrive; and let us not, for the sake of a temporary release from exertion, deprive ourselves of the rewards of past endeavour, or cloud the prospect of future expectation. What would have been the situation of Europe, what would have been our own situation, had we remained till now at peace, without a military or a naval force, without a soldier or a sailor in our service, inured to the hardships, or familiarised with the dangers of war?* Respecting our-

* That part of Mr. Windham's military plan which enjoins enlistment for limited service, I always thought worth the experiment, and I am told, that it answers every expectation by procuring plenty of recruits, and a better description of men. Our finances are also in a most flourishing state, the happy result of Mr. Pitt's wise administration. We shall not, therefore, I fancy, feel the necessity of adopting Mr. Cobbett's absurd and unprincipled plan of getting rid of the national debt, by the annihilation of the funds, a measure which would reduce to beggary about a million of useful subjects, merely because they have placed confidence in the honour of their country. That gloomy pamphlet, which was published a few months ago, entitled, "An Enquiry into the State of the Nation,"

selves I will not pronounce judgment; but this I will venture to assert, that every continental kingdom of Europe would have been lost beyond the hope, perhaps beyond the possibility, of redemption. What of its antient form remains has been chiefly preserved by the constancy and vigour of our efforts, the amplitude of our resources, and the influence of our example.

I am of that sanguine disposition in whatever regards the ultimate issue of just and honourable exertion, that frequently as I have surveyed the mangled map of Europe, and deeply as I have mourned over those heavy calamities which have befallen it, I have ever looked forward to a more cheering prospect; and, dark as the political hemi-

which was written with some eloquence of language, and some ingenuity of thought, but with no force of argument, and little regard to truth, has been, in all its leading speculations, completely refuted. It was at the time confidently asserted, that Mr. Fox was its patron, and approved unreservedly of the sentiments which it detailed. This, however, I never believed; because the despondency which it encouraged was unworthy of his great mind, and the unbecoming abuse which it indirectly levelled against his illustrious rival, must have been totally foreign to the acknowledged candour and liberality of his nature.

sphere has at times been, I have never allowed the extinction of hope. Fortune cannot for ever deal out her weapons at virtue, and spread her shield over vice. The generous energies of mankind will at length burst into action, and dissipate the obstructions which have hitherto impeded their operation. Let us not then retreat from the magnanimous duties which we are called upon to discharge. Let us not feel faint or weary, when the most hazardous perils of the struggle are overcome, and the chances of ultimate victory are so manifold. In the present administration there are many men of great and acknowledged talents, and although they have not been associated in office a sufficient time, to enable us to pronounce a fair judgment on their merits, yet we must hope that the heavy responsibility which, at this eventful period, peculiarly attaches to their trust, will be an ample security that their trust will not be violated.* They have most important ob-

* There is, however, one departure from sound policy with which the present administraion may be most justly reproached, and that is in the marked favour which, since their accession to power, has been extended to the Americans. The American intercourse bill is a violation of the navigation

ligations to perform, and as long as they deserve, they will be sure to possess, the confidence of their country. In times such as these, when the judgments of the Omnipotent are so evidently abroad; when the voice of religion, of honour, of glory, of freedom, of patriotism, is proclaiming our duties, and invoking our support, party-feelings should be unknown. These eminently paramount claims should insure their suppression. A wise and honourable government should be unanimously sustained: a government of an opposite description cannot long exist. The people understand their interests, and will not suffer the neglect of them to pass unnoticed. The eager acclamations of all ranks on the

navigation act of a nature highly detrimental to the naval and commercial interests of Great Britain. The extent also to which the Americans are allowed to trade to our East India settlements, and to transport to Europe, from the remaining colonies of our enemies, their most valuable productions, is equally impolitic and unjust. By this indulgence, our naval officers are deprived of the usual chances of fortune, and the commerce of the country is essentially injured. It is among the merchants a subject of universal complaint. The strange credulity with which the oaths of perjured American captains are listened to, in our court of admiralty, is also matter of general surprise.

rupture of the negotiation with France, gave an ample proof of the generous and undaunted spirit which universally prevails. These effusions were not feigned; they parted warm from the heart. They afforded the most consolatory and the most animating testimony of unwearied patience, of unbroken zeal, of unintimidated resolution, and of a firm and rooted determination never to desert, at any hazard, the sacred cause in which they are engaged. Let then the Corsican beware! Legal chastisement may still satisfy the solemn claims of justice, and he may still close his profligate career by a catastrophe worthy of the enormity of his crimes.*

* It appears that the war between France and Prussia, which could not, after what had passed between the parties, be long delayed, began on the 9th of October, and that two desperate engagements have already taken place. In the former the Prussians had the advantage; in the latter the French have vanquished. The French official account of this bloody battle, which was fought on the 14th of October, at Auerstadt, in the neighbourhood of Jena, has reached us: the Prussian official account is not yet arrived; so that we cannot form so accurate a judgment upon it, as we could wish. The struggle for victory, the French admit to have been very obstinate; and, if the loss on each side has been nearly equal, although the Prussians have

have been obliged to fall back, the advantages which the French have gained cannot be of a very decisive cast. The farther the French advance, the farther they must be separated from their own resources; the farther the Prussians retire, the sooner must they form a junction with the Russians. It is the fear of many that Berlin will fall. My principal fear is that the king of Prussia will endeavour to protect it, to do which, a movement would be necessary, which would enable the French to practise their favourite manœuvre, and to get between him and the Russians. The fate of Berlin has little to do with the fate of the country. In Frederic the Great's time it was twice taken, yet he lived to retrieve his affairs, and completely to humble his enemies. It is, no doubt, a cause of serious lamentation, that the peaceable inhabitants of a populous city should be exposed to the calamities which an army of rapacious ruffians, such as those under Buonaparte, are ever eagerly disposed to inflict. But these are the chances of war, and however to be deplored, are not sometimes to be avoided. If the king of Prussia attempt to save Berlin, he will, in all probability, lose his crown with his capital; if he abandon Berlin for the present, it will, in all probability, only be to recover it at no very distant period. The king of Prussia has, in the first instance, been guilty of great rashness in encountering the French; an event which he courted, and which he might have declined. The desire which prompted him to risk so much, clearly arose from a jealousy of the Russians; at least from a conviction that his soldiers were superior to those of France, and that he could singly engage them with success. His evident policy now is, to keep his army concentred, and to fall back towards the Elbe. The country in which he is, abounds with strong positions, and he may easily take up a post as advantageous as that from which he has been dislodged.

But

But whatever the further successes of the French may be; if they even nearly overrun the Prussian dominions; so long as the king of Prussia possesses an unsubdued mind, a mind that is made up to forfeit life rather than honour, I never shall despair of eventual success. The king of Prussia's preceding conduct certainly does not warrant us to augur in favour of his firmness or his magnanimity:—but his manifesto gives strong proofs of both; and we must hope, that the jeopardy to which previous error has reduced him, and his complete conviction of the insidious designs of his adversary, have operated a radical alteration in his opinions and feelings. But the fate of the Continent, which has done so little for its own defence, is in the hands of the great Disposer of all events; and whatever may be its final destiny, however we may have to lament it, it ought not to produce any change in the determination of this country, for ever to resist the principles and the power of a usurpation, which, wherever it establishes itself, extinguishes every blessing and benefit of life.

To inculcate this doctrine, and to fortify this conviction, has been the chief object of the present pamphlet. Buonaparté is a man whose treachery and infamy are now so completely disclosed, that no independent or honourable nation can treat with him; and as long as his dreadful power lasts, afflicting as the prospect is, I can conceive no safe termination of the present contest.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE truly afflicting events which have occurred during the short interval of time that has elapsed since the first publication of this pamphlet, exhibit an unbroken series of that unexampled fortune, which, from the commencement of Buonaparté's career,* (with the solitary exception of the Egyptian campaign) has uniformly attended on his arms. Wherever his battalions appear, his opponents disperse, and powerful corps and inexpugnable fortresses are surrendered without even an attempt at resistance. These are occurrences which, however well attested, future ages will scarcely credit, and which have been the result of an abjectness of spirit that seems absolutely irreconcileable to the common principles of our nature.

It has been Buonaparté's fate to live at an epoch, when the continent has produced no great man, the Arch-duke Charles excepted (to whom he has never been properly op-

* I of course mean where Buonaparté has been personally engaged.

posed)

posed) as his antagonist, and when, even his enemies, by their treachery, or cowardice, or stupidity, have essentially contributed to his success. With whatever minuteness we examine the page of history, we in vain search for a parallel to the present example, nor, indeed, with all the sources of information, which, as living spectators, present themselves to our enquiries, are we able to account for the stupendous transactions which rivet our contemplation. A kingdom is now acquired with infinitely greater facility than a fortified town was formerly, and sovereigns are dismissed from their governments with as little ceremony, and nearly as little trouble, as servants are dismissed from their places.

The league which, a few months ago, was forming against the insatiate ambition and destructive power of France, and which seemed to promise something of consolation to the humbled hopes of the civilized world, is again dissolved. The king of Prussia, in the course of a few weeks, has been deprived of the greatest part of his hereditary dominions; his army, which assembled at the opening of the campaign in such formidable numbers, has vanished; and himself is a fu-

gitive on the confines of his imperial neighbour.

As far as the Prussian monarch is personally concerned, the sympathies of mankind cannot be expected to go along with him. He was, for many years, the patron of Buonaparté, the supporter of his strength, and the sharer of his spoils. He was, for many years, a principal agent in the production of that awful drama which has been so fatally exhibited on the theatre of real life, and an accomplice in the mischief, under whose annihilating agency he is now so keenly smarting. He has been, more than once, the absolute arbiter of continental Europe. But he preferred the transient fruits of plunder to the perennial rewards of fame. He preferred the base recompence of personal advantage to the everlasting glory of delivering Europe from the direful tyranny that oppressed it. Thus blindly pursuing a plan of local aggrandizement, and sacrificing to this selfish policy the general interests of mankind, he was at last entrapped in the snare which he was preparing for others. When Buonaparté's power was sufficiently consolidated, he, who had been patronized, became the

patron, and, affecting a generous gratitude, he induced the king of Prussia to believe, that the augmentation and stability of the Prussian monarchy, was the object nearest his heart. This farce, which completely succeeded, was continued till Austria was subdued. The crafty plot, by which his faithful ally had been inveigled, was then confidently disclosed, and Frederic William found himself Napoleon's vassal. As he himself expresses—the circle, that was drawn round him, was every day contracted, and at last the liberty of action was denied to him even in the confined space that was left.* Had the king of Prussia, duly appreciating his exalted rank, and disdaining the intrigues and solicitations of an upstart pretender, stood forward in defence of that cause, which was not only the cause of all crowned heads, but of every civilized nation, he would have been still seated on an independent throne.

The fate of the Prussian monarch was, however,

* The king's words are, "I saw a circle, continually becoming narrower, drawn round him, and even the right of moving within it, beginning to be disputed with him." See the king of Prussia's declaration, dated Erfurt, Oct. 9, 1806.

however, so closely interwoven with the fate of the continent; his cause was so intimately associated with the common cause of humanity; so much was yet to be lost or retrieved by the conduct which, at this tremendous crisis, he was about to reveal; and there were such strong symptoms of returning honour and resolution in the new character which his declaration displayed, that our generosity lost sight of his past offences in our wishes for his present success.

Reasoning from the natural feelings and duties of mankind, excited as they were to action, not merely by the recollection of the tragical events, of which they were last year the witnesses, but by the still more stimulating impulse of great and immediate peril, I did venture to hope, though I was far from confidently expecting, that something like manly resistance to the inroads of French usurpation would be manifested. I knew that if the military strength, which remained unbroken, was properly exerted, it was still sufficient to check the irruptions of the modern Goths, and that their barbarian violence was still to be successfully opposed. But events have shewn that the Prussians were

totally undeserving of such expectations. They were subdued before they were attacked. They have been vanquished by their own fears, not by the sword of their enemy, and have proved themselves only fit for the chains which they now seem doomed to wear.

The battle of Auerstadt, which had so unfortunate a termination, was by no means decisive of the fate of the country. By judgment, activity, and courage, every thing was to be repaired. It was a battle such as Frederic the Great often fought, and from which he would have recovered in a few weeks. He would probably have headed, at the expiration of that time, even a more numerous army, and his defeat would have been made conducive to the improvement of military discipline and science. But whilst some countries are destined to flourish through many generations, others decline as rapidly as they have arisen. At the beginning of the last century Prussia was an inconsiderable duchy; the genius of one man raised it to a flourishing kingdom; the absence of that genius has reduced it to its former insignificance.

Of the whole military establishment of the Prussian monarchy, which was maintained on so splendid a footing, and which, from the celebrity that it acquired in the seven years' war, seemed justly to claim an equality with the troops of the most warlike nations, scarcely a vestige remains. So far from having supported their pretensions by acts of valour and prowess, we find, in almost every quarter, a total dereliction of military duty. The loss of one battle was sufficient, not only to break the spirit, but to disband the numerical strength of this once potent state. Of her long list of generals, how few have had their names recorded, except as prisoners in the hands of a rapacious and revengeful adversary? Instead of retreating in order, and rallying in force, the utmost confusion universally prevailed. Neither concert nor arrangement was any where apparent. The heads of the government were borne away by the current of general infatuation, and those few officers and troops, who were resolved to acquit themselves with an energy worthy of a triumphant issue, were totally unprovided with the means of subsistence or escape.*

* It is impossible to read the accounts which Prince Hohenlohe and General Blucher transmitted to the king of Prussia

A reverse of fortune came not within the limits of their calculations, and, when it occurred, it led to irreparable disasters. After the battle of Auerstadt, every thing was abandoned in despair, nor was a single effort put forth for the defence, or the salvation of the kingdom. Where cowardice was insufficient for the completion of its political ruin, we find treachery step in, and all the strong posts of the country entrusted to commanders who have only been emulous to testify their speed at capitulation. It is a painful, it is a humiliating duty, even for a foreigner to record transactions so disgraceful to the character of human kind, especially when they attach to a people whom he has been long accustomed to admire and esteem. But acts like these compel us to pronounce the harshest verdict of condemnation. When,

Prussia of their military operations, without deeply lamenting that they were so entirely deserted by the rest of the army. Their skill as commanders I shall not attempt to appreciate, but they certainly did every thing that bravery could do, to support the honour of the Prussian name. The soldiers under them, animated by the example of their officers, displayed, throughout their arduous retreat, an activity, a fortitude, and a patience under difficulties, which cannot be sufficiently admired, and which even ornamented with laurels the misfortune of defeat.

indeed,

indeed, we observe such places as Magdeburg, Stettin, Custrin, Spandau, and Hameln *, the keys of the Prussian states, all of them celebrated among the strongest fortresses of Europe, and most of them abundantly furnished with garrisons, artillery, ammunition and provisions, instead of making a valiant defence, instead of gloriously perishing under their ruins, capitulating before a shot was fired, or even the trenches were opened; if we could separate the Prussian monarchy from the great cause of humanity, and contemplate its extinction as an insulated question, we should have little reason to regret its fate.

During the present interrupted course of all continental communication, it will be very difficult to ascertain the progression of

* If these fortresses had been saved, the French would never have ventured to penetrate far into Prussia, or if they had, any reverse of fortune, on their part, would at once have restored to the King the whole of his dominions. The case is now widely altered. It has been said, that some of these places were not provisioned. If that be authentic, which however does not appear, why were they not? Treachery is still the cause of their loss; the blame is only shifted from one department of the government to another.

events. The French accounts are uniformly so distorted from truth, when any thing occurs to their disadvantage, that we can repose no reliance on them; and, as every other intelligence must be very circuitous, what is still going forward on the scene of action must chiefly remain matter of conjecture till long after the transactions have taken place.

Chances of salvation may still be imagined for the King of Prussia, but I fear that he is not endowed with any of the qualities of a great man, or any of the resources of an active and intelligent mind. He seems to have nothing in his character either to sustain his own hopes, or to impart confidence to others. Whilst he continued connected in friendship with France, he was constantly engaged in a most degrading barter of royal honour for avaricious profit; and when that connection was dissolved, it was succeeded by measures most irrational in their conception, most pitiful in their execution, and most calamitous in their result.

Whether the Russians are advancing in competent force; or in what numbers they have effected a junction with the remnant of the Prussian army; or whether a disgraceful peace is to

be patched up, or a valiant resistance to be persevered in; is all inveloped in the profoundest obscurity. The movements and intentions of Austria are equally mysterious. There is no longer any possibility of unravelling the complicated absurdities of these continental cabinets, or of ascertaining the nature of the spells in which they may be bound. They have hitherto been most successfully conspiring the ruin of each other, and, by the same process, confirming their own. Prussia last year refused to save Austria, when the risk was small: Austria may now be inclined to retaliate, and, with stronger reason, refuse to assist Prussia, when the risk is so fearfully increased.

After the events which have successively happened, during the revolution of the last five funereal years; after the manner in which most of the continental sovereigns have shewn themselves lost to every feeling of glory or interest; we are almost induced to resign in despair every expectation of generous and manly exertion. Whilst indeed there is so much fortune, activity and skill, on one side, and so much stupidity, treachery and cowardice, on the other, it is in vain to look

forward to any thing like successful resistance. Under such circumstances it is idle to speculate on human action; and, as far as the continental nations are concerned, we must, I fear, leave them, until the excess of their sufferings bring them back to a just sense of duty, and stimulate them cordially to unite in deliverance from an intolerable yoke. Great as Buonaparté's fortune and power may be, with them the means of redress must ever reside.

Whilst this cloud of uncertainty is hovering over the European continent; whilst it is so impossible to penetrate through the gloomy atmosphere which is floating around it, or to frame any rational conclusion respecting the efforts on which it may yet resolve, in order to extricate itself from its present subjugation; the plans of Buonaparté are less problematical. That he himself will at last be overset by his inordinate schemes of conquest, and, in his fall, subvert the empire which he has reared, I have always been, and still am, confident. How much more misery and ruin he may be allowed to occasion, I shall not attempt to define; but that his wickedness and mischief will increase in

mathematical proportion to his power, I will venture to pronounce as an unerring axiom.

He is evidently elated, beyond all bounds, at his unprecedented success, and the childishnes of his folly keeps pace with the madness of his ambition. Equally a contemner of the the ordinances of God and man, with unparalleled audacity he sets them at equal defiance. Plunder and death are his ordinary watchwords, the one administering to his prodigality, the other feeding his revenge*. Nor is the meanness of his character lost in the enormity of his more atrocious vices, which rather act as reflectors to place it in a more glaring point of view. Every public act partakes of the baseness as well as of the injustice and cruelty of his disposition. What can evince a stronger sense of a sordid and vindictive soul, than the unmeasured exultation and the

* The horrors which the French troops have committed at Lubec, Wirtzburg, in the principality of Hesse, and in many other parts of Germany, are not to be described. Church and state, rich and poor, the matron and the virgin, decrepid age and helpless infancy, have been the indiscriminate victims of their cupidity, their cruelty, and their lust.

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unrelenting rigour with which he persecutes his fallen foes? The most execrable tyrant that ever cursed the earth was generous and merciful to Buonaparté.

In possession of the greatest part of the Prussian territory, all the minor princes of the empire, who had hitherto escaped, and who were disposed to engage in the northern confederacy, have also fallen under his controul. Saxony, Hesse, and Brunswick, have perished with their principal, and have been unconditionally delivered up to the humiliation of conquest, and the rapacity of plunder. Even the imperial free towns have been afflicted, in the same degree, with Buonaparté's tremendous visitations; and the industrious members of peaceful communities, who have never committed an offence, any farther than that which, from their commercial relations, connected them with this country, have been wantonly subjected to all the calamities which an army of desperate and dissolute banditti, can be imagined to inflict. Whether people be friendly or inimical, so long as they are wealthy, the same consequences ensue. When a reason is wanting, a pretext is invented, which exposes

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the sufferers exactly to the same penalty. This is the way in which his freebooting army is maintained; by such means it is fed, and clothed, and paid, and rewarded. Cut off as he is from all regular resources, from all those beneficial channels, which, whilst they pour an ample tribute into the public treasury, fertilise every province in their course, he has thought proper to adopt expedients, which, whilst they are infinitely less productive to the state, are totally ruinous to the people. His troops support his power, which, in return, supports them, by the pillage which he, on all occasions, warrants them to commit. Robbery is become, with the French, the chief branch of revenue, and they set as systematically about it, as any band of twenty or thirty ruffians that ever infested a provincial district of their country. From constant practice they have arrived at a degree of intelligence, which appears, as if by instinct, to penetrate into the most recondite secret, and at once to discover the spot which was vainly expected to secure the hidden store. Buonaparté has now indeed so many vassal states under his domination, that he will probably regard them

them as one great farm, divided into different inclosures, which he will prey upon in rotation, and which, as they recover from the state of exhaustion to which his profusion and tyranny have reduced them, will be again condemned to the same outrageous discipline. He has already given a hint to Spain sufficiently indicative of his intention, and Poland is considered as a valuable harvest in reserve.

The evident object of Buonaparté is to erect a military government throughout Europe, over which he purposes despotically to preside. He has taken his measures accordingly, and has so far prospered in his plan. He has conquered, degraded, or annihilated, all those princes and governments who were in possession of the strong barriers, which formerly, so powerfully counteracted the views, and checked the irruptions of the French on the side of Germany. Not only is the left bank of the Rhine his, but Hesse, Bavaria, all the northern States, Switzerland, and the Tyrol; so that the Emperor of Austria, the only German potentate whose independence has survived a total wreck, is, on every frontier, exposed. Buonaparté has,

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moreover, so distributed his lieutenants and his kings around him, and so artfully amalgamated their interests with his own, that, at least for the present, they are not likely to aim at separation. He is, at the same time, so watchful of their movements, and so tenacious of his ascendency, that he will not suffer a point to be disputed; and if they are not desirous of being punished as the most contumacious of rebels, they must rest satisfied with being stigmatised as the most abject of slaves. He is the mighty ruler to ordain; they are the mere machines to submit.

By the authority which he has delegated to the different branches of his own family, and by the alliances which he has compelled or induced some of the once illustrious and uncontaminated houses of Europe to form with them, he has still more closely rivetted their fortunes to his own. Not however at all satisfied with what he has acquired, his acquisitions have only furnished fresh aliment to his boundless desires. Wilder schemes are adopted, harsher declarations are promulgated, and projects which, a few months ago, were in embryo, have already assumed the

the form and substance of adult growth. The poor Jews have, for the present, been abandoned to their desultory occupations in the various quarters of the globe; the holy city of Jerusalem is to remain, for a few years longer, subject to an infidel race; and Poland is now the selected Land of Promise. That ill-fated country is preparing for a revolution, far more terrible than that which it lately underwent. Intended to be restored to its kingly rank, that it may be a suitable provision for the eminent virtues and exalted merit of that brave and celebrated admiral Jerome Buonaparté,* should the plan succeed, not only the vices of its ancient government will be renovated, but many others of a more deadly nature will be incorporated with their mass. The Poles have already been invited by various proclamations, to throw off their allegiance to their present sovereigns, and to transfer it to the contempti-

* It is said that Buonaparté, amid the multiplicity of his schemes, has it in agitation to grant permission to Roman Catholic priests to marry; and that he destines his mother, who, a few years ago, was a washerwoman in Corsica, to be the lovely bride of his holiness the pope.

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ble puppet whom Buonaparté has been pleased to nominate. But, however indignant they may still feel at the recollection of past grievances, and at the treacherous manner in which their monarchy was subverted, they will not perhaps be very anxious to have it regenerated, either according to the maxims of French polity, or under the auspices of the French chief. The body of the people, at all events, is not likely to assist in promoting such views, as nothing can be more an object of dread to them, than a return to that abject state of servitude, from which the dissolution of their old government partially relieved them. Even the nobles have, one should imagine, sufficient discrimination not to be desirous of a nominal restoration of their privileges through the medium of French interference.

To defeat this meditated plan, the Russians are already in their Polish dominions, and the King of Prussia, who has put an end to the armistice by peremptorily rejecting the terms which were insisted on, during the late conferences at Charlottenburg, must, from that very circumstance, notwithstanding all his disasters, be still at the head of a con-

siderable body of men. It will be the policy of France to tempt Austria, by some insidious proposal, to cede all right to Poland. Perhaps the repossession of Silesia may be the promised boon of non-interference. We must, however, deprecate such an arrangement, and hope that Austria, who is rapidly recruiting her impaired strength, will not suffer herself to be trepanned by an acquisition which would only be granted now to be taken away at no very distant period. But no one, who has had any intercourse with Buonaparté, can well forget, that he only negotiates when he is afraid to fight; that he only makes offers when he intends to betray; and that he only ratifies treaties in the design of breaking them, the very first moment that it suits his nefarious purpose.

Russia and Austria sincerely in union, and properly combining their resources, have undoubtedly still the power to resist France, and if the Continent is to be reinstated in its independence, to them alone can we now look for so desirable an event. Even the King of Prussia, rapid and decisive as his downfall has been, may yet retrieve his fame, and recover his throne. Many have fallen

fallen as low, and have afterwards blazed forth with additional lustre. The school of adversity is also the school of heroism and wisdom: and, having nothing to expect from the clemency or the magnanimity of his opponent, he must now entirely rely on his own personal character, and the succours which his two imperial neighbours may judge it expedient to grant. But on this subject, it is needless to expatiate. Interested, indeed, as we must ever feel in the fate of the continental nations, and desirous as we must ever be, to assist them in the restoration of the old order of things, what, at this awful and critical juncture, chiefly concerns us Britons, is the immediate situation in which our own empire is placed as the antagonist and the rival of France*.

Buonaparté, from the very infancy of his power, has, on all occasions, evinced that

* Though there is very little ground, after what has happened, for such an expectation, yet it is barely possible, that his present forlorn and desperate situation may call forth some unsuspected vigour, may kindle some latent etherial spark, which may transfuse their energy and warmth into the hearts of his deluded and terrified subjects, and still emancipate them from the misery and disgrace of a foreign yoke.

deadly hate towards this country, which is naturally enough kindled in the breast of a vindictive and insatiate tyrant towards the obstacle which interrupts the course of his experiments, and defeats the completion of his views. Whenever he thinks of Great Britain, at least whenever he has occasion to mention it, he is evidently inflamed to a pitch of madness, and, in the evaporation of his rage, he attempts by the violence of his language, to impart a borrowed importance to the impotence of his decrees. He not only confiscates all British property, wherever the prying and hungry avarice of his free-booting officers and soldiers can detect it; but he compels every individual within the grasp of his tyranny, who has any commercial dealings with England, to deliver up his books, that the state of their reciprocal accounts may be inspected, and that the balance may be appropriated, as a lawful seizure, to the use of his horde of thieves.* Outrageous also at the few English whom he can lay hold of in the contest of honourable war, he

* See Mortier's military proclamation, dated at Hamburg November 23. Also Bourienne's note to the Senate, dated November 24.

wreaks his unmanly vengeance on peaceable civilians of our nation, wherever they can be caught, and treats them with a rigour as distantly removed from the common feelings of humanity, as it is unsanctioned by the law of nations, or by the usage and opinions of civilized life.* Yet, however this exertion of despotism may coincide with the profligacy of his character, and gratify the base and unsoldierlike passions which are nourished in his breast, what advantage in a political view can he expect it to procure him? It occasions great distress, and perhaps utter ruin, to a few unfortunate individuals, but can it be supposed to produce any serious injury to the ascendency of this country? Does he calculate by such means to lull our suspicions, to convince our reason, to eradicate our antipathies, to exhaust our resources, or to subdue our courage?

But, in every thing that concerns England, the intemperance of his passions bursts forth. Even our Sovereign is treated with personal aversion and disrespect, and the family alliance, which unites him with the

* See Buonaparté's proclamation, dated Berlin, 21st November.

princes

princes of Brunswick and Mecklenburg, has been the chief cause of the unexampled rigour with which their dominions have been assailed*. Nor has the Princess Royal of England escaped. She has been obliged to brook the humiliation of receiving, as her guest, this booted Corsican; and her escutcheon has been blemished, and her exalted rank insulted, by being compelled to accept, from his sacrilegeous hands, what he chuses to denominate a regal crown. These measures, however, where he *has* the power, are as distantly removed from any idea that we can form of the elevation and dignity of the human mind, as his decrees, where he has *not* the power, are puerile and absurd. Next to our destruction, the object nearest his heart is the destruction of our commerce, through which he flatters

* Not satisfied with their defeat, or the possession of their dominions, his restless activity still follows up the pursuit. He seems determined to hunt them down, and the pleasures of the chase must be completed by the death of the victim. Even after death, his revenge is unsatiated, and the rights of sepulture are denied to a brave and magnanimous prince, merely because he displayed those virtues which corresponded with his station as an independent sovereign, and his descent from an illustrious ancestry.

himself

himself that his primary wish will be accomplished. He has, consequently, interdicted, in all places where his authority or influence extends, every description of traffic with Great Britain. Not an article of British manufacture or produce is any where to be admitted, under the severest penalties; and we are excommunicated, by this modern manufacturer of anathemas, from every kind and degree of connexion with the continental states.

But whither do these frantic ordinances tend? Can he, in the sober moments of meditation, if any such he has, expect by his tyrannic prohibitions, to exclude us from that intercourse, which our ingenuity, our wealth, and our power have acquired, and which their wants have rendered necessary? If the advantages were entirely on our side, he might perhaps, by the severity of his menaces, put an end to them; but when they are reciprocal; when indeed, the various commodities, whether of colonial growth or of home manufacture, which we have been accustomed to circulate through the European communities, are become requisite to their main'enance; when their own country is inadequate

adequate to their support, and their industry procures them from foreign parts what, without that industry, they must entirely forego; when, if we withhold our supplies, they can neither produce them by internal exertion, nor obtain them from any other market; when, in fine, as trading towns, they are intrinsically dependent on trade for a livelihood; Buonaparté might as well attempt to deprive them of water and air, as effectually to restrain such an intercourse. He must, therefore, either verbally mitigate his orders; or he must connive at their evasion; or the ingenuity of those, who are the devoted sufferers, must devise some mode of eluding them. The population of a country must be furnished with the means of subsistence, and if, from commercial cities you take away their commerce, the means of subsistence are evidently forfeited. One hundred thousand people collected in houses, which stand on a few acres of land, cannot, at a moment's notice, forsake those occupations to which they have been bred, and to which they are entirely indebted for support. In these expensive and portentous times, when, from the unhappy state of society,

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the pursuits of agriculture, and the civil avocations of life, are so seriously interrupted, what remains of political economy acquires an additional importance. Nor does any branch of it so essentially suffer from the effects of arbitrary restraint as trade. Where operations are generated through the medium of wealth, integrity and punctuality are of the highest moment, and the most trivial impediment alarms the confidence by which public credit is chiefly sustained. It is only from the security which is so generally afforded by the respective legislatures, that this kind of beneficial interchange, by which the deficiencies of one country are supplied from the superfluities of another, and from which indeed the revenue of every regular government is, in great measure, derived, can be upheld. If then, it could be supposed, that the Continent should universally reject our manufactures and colonial productions, we should no longer take off their raw materials, and all commercial correspondence ceasing between us, they would shortly be reduced to a state of penury and destitution. The universal superiority of our navy, whilst it obstructed their applica-

tions to more distant regions, would enable us soon to discover and command fresh markets for our manufactures, as well as abundance of raw materials to feed them. We might be put to inconvenience, but they would be undone.*

As for founding manufactures of their own, similar to those which are procured from this country, it is quite a chimerical notion. Such establishments can only be a consequence arising out of the gradual progress of the arts, and the joint production of labour, ingenuity, and wealth. In this respect, therefore, we may set Buonaparté completely at defiance, and whatever temporary embarrassment or loss may be sustained by individuals, or by the commercial world at large, it is too unnatural a state of things long to continue.

* If we, moreover, were disposed rigorously to enforce our maritime rights, and effectually to put an end to that branch of the carrying trade through which neutrals supply Europe with the colonial produce of our enemies; should we even confine the American States to that part of it, which not only our rights, but our interests evidently demand, what would become of the continent? Our *power*, indeed, should Buonaparte's atrocious injustice force us to a full exertion of it, could accomplish much more.

About the future accomplishment of Buonaparte's plans, and the extension of his usurpations, people reason in various ways. Some prognosticate that resistance will be entirely vain, and that, having overwhelmed every continental state, he will finally establish his military tribunals on the ruins of all prescriptive and legitimate government. Their apprehensions indeed reach still farther, and they believe that his despotic sway will, in the course of a few years, be so systematically organized, and so firmly cemented, that it will be perpetuated, through many ages, in the Buonaparté race. This, however, may be regarded as an hypothesis, rendered terribly fanciful from the extravagant fears of the present generation, but which cannot be supported by any conclusion drawn from the history of preceding times, or from any rational conjecture built on the probable course of future events. It may perhaps be objected, that from past experience I have no right to reason, for, as the transactions, which are the daily topics of our surprise, our mortification, and our regret, bear no reference to former occurrences, they can no longer be

relied on as a criterion of judgment. Not for the present moment, I allow. But although Nature, by some violent convulsion, may be, to a certain degree, discomposed, her laws nevertheless remain invariable and universal. Whether in the physical or moral world, her agency must ultimately prevail. The human heart and intellect continue the same, and however they may be appalled or stupified for a time, their action and discrimination must at some period revive. Although the modern French, like the barbarians of old, have inundated most of the states of Europe, they have yet, even with their savage vices, blended the arts and refinements of cultivated reason. The Alaric of the 19th century cannot extinguish the illumination of the immortal soul, nor, with all his power, can he extirpate the learning, or consign to oblivion the discoveries, of an enlightened and inquisitive age. When therefore the violence of the present concussion, and those immediate consequences which may yet ensue, shall have subsided, the order and harmony of social life, will, in all probability, be restored, and the human mind, improved perhaps by the corrective

tive lesson which it has received, will proceed in the acquisition of knowledge, of happiness, and of virtue.*

* Such extraordinary circumstances have happened to sustain the fortune of Buonaparté, our just hopes of his destruction have been so often disappointed, that one is fearful of delivering any thing like a positive opinion respecting approaching events; I should, otherwise, say, that Buonaparté was, at this moment, in a most hazardous situation. He has advanced into the heart of Poland, and his troops, in possession of Warsaw,† have taken up their position on the banks of the Vistula, far beyond which they have not hitherto deemed it prudent to venture. The Russian head-quarters, by the last accounts, were on the banks of the Narew, and amounted to a considerable force under general Benningen. Kamenskoi, who is to assume the chief command with unlimited powers, was hourly expected. Reinforcements are also daily accumulating. They seem at length to have adopted the Fabian plan of declining engagement, and acting on the defensive, till at least their forces are sufficiently concentrated to promise a successful attack. As they retreat, what cannot be carried away, is destroyed. They

† The French entered Warsaw on the 29th of November. Buonaparté followed from Posen on the 17th December. The insurrection of the Poles in his favour has been far below his computation. The king of Prussia is at Konigsberg at the head of the remains of his army, and his late proclamations inspire a hope, that he will at last perform his duty. On the 15th December Breslau still held out, and Dantzic had not been attacked.

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This most desirable state of things is chiefly to be effected by the resistance that may still be made to the further encroachments of the

are in their own country, abundantly supplied with all their wants, and in a climate to which their constitutions are inured. Buonaparté is separated from the frontier of France near 900 miles, and every individual inhabitant of this vast tract of land, which intervenes between him and his domestic resources, must be putting up the most fervent prayers for his extermination. His army, amounting probably to above 200,000 men, (for his fears have assembled not only every soldier that could be spared from Germany, but fresh levies from France, round his person) must soon exhaust their magazines, and will find insurmountable difficulties in endeavouring to draw subsistence from the bleak and barren plains on which they are encamped. Nor will his soldiers be very willing, or very able, to endure the severity of a northern climate at this inclement season; and if they can only be detained where they are, it is more than probable, that one half of them will waste away before the winter is over. Fatal diseases are already among them. Russia is making the most strenuous exertions, and is rapidly collecting her military strength; the Austrians are also evidently watching for a favourable concurrence of circumstances; and, prostrate and broken-hearted as most of the continental states are, should Buonaparté meet with any decisive reverse, they would eagerly seize the opportunity of revenge, and scarce a soldier of his barbarian army would return to their native land. Whilst Buonaparté is absent, France itself may be laying the foundation of some plan which

great enemy of mankind, a being who has apparently been appointed by Providence as a temporary scourge, as the instrument of His vengeance, and the sword of His wrath, to an offending world. And indeed he is provided with every property which, in human imagination, can render such a mission dreadful, for, to the inbred malevolence and brutality of his nature, he unites all that is cunning in artifice, perfidious in treachery, overbearing in insolence, rapacious in avarice, and destructive in ambition.

Intoxicated by his prosperity, he has, in his late proclamations, most ridiculously announced the various punishments which he designs to inflict on his only successful enemy. He has also as unwisely notified to the world the only terms on which he will now consent to grant peace to Great Britain. He has declared, that he will not lay down his arms " until he has obliged the English to renounce the scheme of disturbing the con-

which may finally deliver it from the scourge of his domination. The Russians have made a successful descent on the coast of Dalmatia, and Lauriston is said to be blockaded at Ragusa with 6000 men.

tinent, and the tyranny of the seas."* In another publication he says, "the English would make no peace, but they *shall* make it, and France will include more coasts and states in her federative system:" † in a third, he pronounces, that "France will retain every thing, and England shall give every thing up."‡ But he forgets to inform us, how all these furious denunciations are to be enforced. What then do they bespeak, but a littleness of mind, as remote from discretion as it is irreconcileable to common sense? It surely can never be imagined, that we are so deeply steeped in the waters of Lethe as to forget, even for a moment, that they originate with a man, who, whatever his fortune may have been elsewhere, has not been able to carry a single project against this country into successful execution; who swore, four years ago, to invade, at the head of his hungry legions, this land of freedom, but who

* See Buonaparté's proclamation to his army, dated Potsdam, October 26.

† See 24th Bulletin, as published in the Moniteur.

‡ See Buonaparté's Message to the Senate, dated Berlin, Nov. 29th.

has never ventured to trust himself within our reach; who has often since sworn, that we should have nothing but the peace of Amiens, yet who, during a late negotiation,* was

* I have attentively perused the correspondence which took place during the late negotiation between England and France, both as it was published in the Moniteur, and as it has since been submitted, by his Majesty's command, to both Houses of Parliament. In the latter publication, the chasms which the French government thought fit to leave have been filled up, and many important facts, which they suppressed, are brought to light. Little as I approved of the negotiation, I must acknowledge that it has been conducted by our government with great talent and dignity. Throughout the whole, I can discover nothing, on our part, but manly candour, and a most religious observance of public faith and maintenance of national honour; and, on the part of the French, nothing but chicanery, tergiversation, and deceit. These, indeed, are the political characteristics and distinctions of the two nations. It is a very trite remark, that the French always overreach us at negotiation. But the reason is obvious. It will not, I hope, be contended that they surpass us in acuteness or sagacity. In treachery and artifice they do. They use weapons which we reject with disdain. We tell them what we will do, and perform what we promise: they conceal what they intend to do, and make promises in the view of breaking them. We are governed by the principles of national faith and individual honour; they acknowledge no such obligation as the former; and personal

 honour,

was anxiously desirous of enticing us to accept very different terms; and who has now committed himself by other oaths as empty, and which he will, no doubt, by and by, find it as convenient to break. Our power by sea is at least as decisive as his by land, nor is it exposed to those reverses and revolutions which will, sooner or later, inevitably undermine and subvert his empire. A proclamation, that the British isles are in a state of blockade, * issued by a tyrant whose fleets, so far from interrupting our navigation, are fleeing in all directions from the mere terror of our name, can only expose him to the derision and contempt of every rational mind.

What Buonaparté's further acquisitions on the Continent may possibly be, it is useless to conjecture, because they must so entirely depend on the feelings of a part of mankind, who have hitherto shewn themselves but lit-

honour, sacrificed to the advancement of national interest, is regarded by them as the acme of political merit.

* See various messages and proclamations, dated Nov. 1st, 21st, 25th, &c. &c. thus repeated to give *publicity* and *authenticity* to the decree. In fact, if it had not been for such wise and discreet publications, England would have known nothing of the matter.

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tle disposed to vindicate their own rights, or to repel his aggressions. The moment any thing like well-arranged concert and determined resolution shall marshal their strength against him, his easily acquired laurels will begin to wither. Buonaparté can only appear great, when contrasted with what is contemptible. Compared with what is intrinsically great, he shrinks into the inherent baseness of his character. How ardently has he laboured to establish the opinion that his soldiers are as superior to ours, as he reluctantly acknowledges, our sailors are superior to his, and thus to balance the account of British and French valour! But do not military events directly contradict his pretensions? The only two instances in which British and French troops have, in the course of this long war, been fairly put to the trial, are those which occurred on the plains of Egypt and of Maida; and on those plains, now immortalised by deeds of British heroism, have we not revived the most splendid periods of our history?*

* See Mr. Windham's very eloquent speech, introductory to his motion for a vote of thanks to Sir John Stewart and his gallant army, delivered in the House of Commons December 22d, 1806.

Do we not, in those celebrated achievements, retrace the resemblance of our proudest times, and imagine regenerated those days when our Edwards and our Henrys were acquiring a never fading glory at the expence of our hereditary foes? But how has all this come to pass? Why has Buonaparté been able to produce such an impression on the continent; and why has he been unable to make any impression on us? Because, on the continent, there have been treachery and cowardice among the leading men, and a total want of spirit and unanimity among the people; and because, in this country, the people are loyal and brave, and our statesmen and generals are vigilant and incorruptible.

Whilst, therefore, all the extraordinary transactions which have recently happened, are exhibited to our senses under such odious and terrific forms; whilst they point out to us, more plainly than ever, the character and views of the great enemy and disturber of mankind, and the melancholy consequences which result from a desertion of public virtue; instead of dismaying us, they must only tend more forcibly to concentrate the powerful energies

energies and disinterested feelings of this great and distinguished nation. The fate of pusillanimity and of other concomitant vices, has been most tremendously exemplified in the disasters which have accumulated on the continent: the fate of courage and of patriotism has been as signally manifested by the glory and prosperity which have blessed our arms. If the Continent has been most severely chastised for its effeminate degeneracy, we have been most liberally rewarded for our masculine fortitude; and we may, I hope, confidently rely on the bountiful mercy of Providence, that, as long as we remain faithful to the sanctified cause in which we are engaged, and strive to act up to those sacred duties which we are called upon to discharge, His strong arm will continue to uphold us. We possibly, before long, may be the only country left, that is uncontaminated by French vices, unawed by French menaces, and unsubdued by French power. This land may possibly, be the last palladium of liberty, the last sanctuary of religion, the last refuge of moral worth, the last asylum of the social charities of humanity. But what have we to dread? We have an invincible

vincible navy on the surrounding seas; we have, on our shores, an army as invincible; and should these slaves be courageous enough to grapple with us on this happy land; should they attempt to carry pillage, and slaughter, and the tumult of their impious orgies into the bosom of our domestic enjoyments, it requires no spirit of prophecy to foretell their total defeat. This is a truth which every Briton feels as distinctly as the vital warmth within him; which is supported by the exploits of a long succession of ages; and of which he can never doubt, whilst he prefers freedom to slavery, virtue to vice, or glory to dishonour.

The gloomy perspective which still presents itself to our contemplation, when we consider the probable duration of the arduous and burdensome contest in which we are involved, and the many misfortunes and sacrifices with which a war, the most successful, must inevitably be attended, let it be our strenuous endeavour to irradiate by the christian virtues of patience and endurance, feats of heroism worthy of a righteous cause and an illustrious people; worthy of a people who are contending for their laws, their

their liberties, their country, and their king; for every thing that is sacred in religion, venerable in virtue, honourable in independence, and endearing in domestic life, against the most cruel, destructive, rapacious and ignominious usurpation, that ever attempted to bind down, in galling and abject submission, the body and the mind of man.

London, January 8, 1807.

THE END.

T. Gillet, Printer, Wild-Court, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.

A FEW

REMARKS

ON

A PIECE OF CRITICISM

IN THE

LAST NUMBER

OF THE

EDINBURGH REVIEW.

BY

WILLIAM HUNTER, ESQ.

LONDON:

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1807.

[*Price Sixpence.*]

T. Gillet, Printer, Wild-court.

A FEW

REMARKS,

&c. &c.

HAVING read, in the last number of the Edinburgh Review, an examination of a pamphlet, lately published by me, entitled "Reasons for not making Peace with Buonaparte," I must beg leave to offer a few remarks on that very ingenious and fanciful production. I am induced thus to notice it, not, I can safely aver, on account of any soreness arising from the critical acumen which it displays, but because it contains two gross misrepresentations which have, manifestly, been purposely made, and because I should wish the public to have an opportunity of properly appreciating the degree of candour with which these Northern Reviewers, occasionally, exercise their talents.

The gentleman, who has undertaken to discuss the merits of my pamphlet, and which he has done at considerable length, has certainly bestowed upon it much unprofitable labour; I say *unprofitable*, because, in the departments of literature, labour without skill must always be unprofitably employed. With his hostility I am not in the least angry; nor am I disposed to quarrel with him for his dulness; had he only been correct, I should have had no accusation to prefer. But correctness, which is a quality incumbent on all persons in all situations, is peculiarly so in that, which this gentleman has thought fit to assume, and for which, as I shall shortly make appear, he is totally unqualified.

In page 426 of the Review, this profound and accurate critic observes: "According to him," meaning me, "this best of possible plans miscarried from the unlucky concurrence of *seven* impossible events." Now this, on the very face of it, is such palpable nonsense, that had it not been brought forward against me, in the shape of a serious charge,

I should

I should naturally have concluded that it was an errour of the press. To evince, however, his logical powers, and the validity of his accusation, he follows it up by the very quotation from which he has deduced his inference, and which, strange to say, flatly contradicts it. Alluding to the transactions which took place in the memorable campaign of 1805, I thus express myself, "Such was the developement of events, which, before they happened, appeared placed beyond the verge of possibility, and which yet were all indispensably necessary to Buonaparte's success."* Is this to assert, that a *possible* plan is defeated by *impossible* events, an absurdity which no words of mine can, by any torturing, convey, and which this gentleman must admit to be a pure creation of his own exalted brain? Of the justice of *my* remark, he has indeed himself afforded an additional illustration, for had he not, by the *developement* of his intellectual stores, proved the *possibility* of deliberately writing and printing so

* See Reasons for not making Peace, &c. 1st edit. page 11.

ridiculous

ridiculous a paradox, I should have deemed it among the number of *impossible* events.

I am next accused of *gravely* talking of the *cheerfulness* with which I would pay *ten* times the amount of the present taxes, which (adds our arithmetical observer) is, unfortunately, *quite impossible.** Now, in the first place, I say no such thing. In the sentence to which he refers, *taxes* are not even mentioned, a word which he, no doubt for some benevolent purpose, has had the liberality to substitute. The terms which I employ, are *sufferings and burdens*;† and although taxes form a *part* of those sufferings and burdens, to which a community involved in war is ne-

* See note in page 432 of the Review.

† Alluding to the blessings by which this country is distinguished, my words are these, "Nor shall I be accused of estimating the value of these blessings too highly, when I declare, that if our sufferings and burdens were ten times as great, provided they led to the same security, we should have no reason to murmur." See Reasons for not making Peace, &c. 1st edition, page 69.—Our critic seems astonishingly attached to the terms *possible* and *impossible*, but without sufficient cause, for he so confounds them, that it is difficult to guess at the meaning in which he is desirous that they should be understood—were he *intelligible*, he might be *entertaining*.

cessarily exposed, is this sagacious politician now to learn for the first time, that there are *other* sufferings and burdens besides taxes, and very serious ones too, which a state of hostility inevitably generates?* To shew, however, how very little he comprehends the subject on which he expatiates, I can easily demonstrate, that, if I had even made use of

* Our critic employs taxes *generally*, as I employ sufferings and burdens *generally*. In the way, however, that the above terms are employed by me, he could not possibly know what portion of the sum total of our sufferings and burdens I admitted taxation to be; nor could he know, whether I had at all in view the increase of taxes when I made my declaration. Under such doubtful circumstances, he might have had the *charity* to suppose, that I did not design to assert what he conceived to be *impossible*. If he did not mean to apply the term taxes *generally*, but only to express by it a *part* of our sufferings and burdens, which every one must admit them to be, he ought so to have explained himself. He would, however, be still wrong in his position, as far, at least, as his attack on me is concerned. I maintain, and without fear of valid contradiction, that it is very *possible* for our *sufferings and burdens* to be *ten* times increased without any *augmentation* of taxes, nay even with a *diminution* of taxes. But this gentleman seems to reduce *every* suffering and burden to the scale of money, and to consider the deprivation of that precious commodity as necessarily involving every other human calamity.

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his favourite term *taxes*, I should, by no means, be in that dilemma in which he vainly imagines his candid ingenuity has entrapped me.

Suppose, for instance, that I have 10,000*l.* invested in the funds (I take simple numbers, that they may the more readily meet his apprehension) from which I derive an income of 500*l.* If from this latter sum 50*l.* be annually deducted by the government, I conceive that I then pay 10 per cent. on that part of my income; if 100*l.* be annually deducted, I pay 20 per cent. and so on. Thus far, I trust, is clear.

I shall next suppose an event, which is certainly not very likely to happen, and which, if it ever should happen, will, in all probability, be brought about by the adoption of that system of policy of which this gentleman so favourably thinks, but which, luckily, he so feebly recommends. I shall suppose this country subdued, and delivered up to the tyranny and rapacity of Buonaparte's sway. So circumstanced, *does* this peaceful champion imagine, *can* he imagine,

however deluded by his silly conjectures, or wrapped up in his preposterous reveries, that such a government would be satisfied with the contributions which are at present imposed? Can he fancy, that *we* should be singled out as the favoured nation, and that a plan of plunder, so pertinaciously pursued in Holland, Brabant, Switzerland, Italy, and Germany, would be abandoned or relaxed, out of mercy to Great Britain? Does he conceive, that such a power would be content with income, and would leave capital unmolested? But I will only suppose that assessment to take place, which, as an act of authority from a ferocious, an avaricious, and a victorious foe over the people of this country, might certainly be considered as a measure of moderation, and that, instead of 10 per cent. on income, 20 per cent. on capital would be levied. Why here at once is a sum which is forty times as great as that which, in virtue of the existing tax on property, I am already bound to pay, and which, when viewed in the relation that it bears to income, instead of being 10 per cent. amounts to 400 per cent.

Now,

Now, although I should be extremely loth to have such a sum forcibly taken from me by a public robber like Buonaparte, or by any of his profligate agents, yet I have no hesitation in declaring (notwithstanding the amount so much exceeds that which has incurred this gentleman's displeasure) that I would most cheerfully part with it, were such a sacrifice *necessary* to preserve my country from the scourge and the shame of a foreign domination; and that, on such grounds, I would not only most willingly contribute it for one year, but for as many successive years as my capital would hold out.*

* Our intelligent and accomplished critic having, evidently, a very limited knowledge of figures, that he may not mistake, or *mis-state* my meaning a second time, I shall add a little further explanation. I have stated the above proposition, merely to shew, that *there is not an impossibility* of paying *ten* times the amount of our present taxes, which he, so triumphantly, asserts *there is*. If I estimate the aggregate taxes (including the 10 per cent. on income) paid, in various ways, by the opulent part of the community in Great Britain, as high as 40 per cent. on expenditure, which, on a general scale, is considerably above the usual computation, instead of having 200*l.* deducted from an income of 500*l.* (supposing I spent the whole

I flatter myself that I have now said enough to convince this critical Gentleman of his puerile and clumsy errours with regard

whole sum) by the English mode of taxation; by the French mode, I should have 2000*l.* deducted from a capital of 10,000*l.* a sum exactly ten times as great. It must also be taken into consideration, that the 200*l.*, raised by the English mode, includes every species of taxation on an expenditure of 500*l.*; and, as there is no absolute necessity to spend the whole of that sum, the portion of taxes contributed must be, in a considerable degree, dependent on the inclination of the individual possessing it; whereas, the French mode of proceeding, by attacking capital (directly or indirectly it matters not) falls, inevitably, in equal proportions on all capitalists, nor does it preclude the existence of other taxes on income and expenditure, which would not, in all likelihood, be lightly administered. Instead, therefore, of proving that merely *ten* times the amount of our present taxes could *possibly* be paid, (which was all that I undertook to prove) I have shewn, that under certain circumstances, considerably above that ratio would *probably* be exacted. Did I want to prove more, I might extend the sum demanded to 30 per cent. on capital, which, in such a calamitous case, would approach, I imagine, much nearer the reality. This, indeed, is so far from being a chimerical hypothesis, that if our critic will take the trouble of ascertaining the fact, he will find, that the experiment has actually succeeded in Holland, and in several of the other French conquests. After having bestowed

gard to those points of which I have taken the freedom to complain. With his political opinions, I have nothing to do. He is as perfectly at liberty to retain his, as to animadvert on mine, nor shall I waste any words in refuting the one, or in vin-

ed so much pains, in endeavouring to furnish him with information, I hope, that he will not be so perverse, or so ungrateful, as again to misconstrue my language; and I have particularly to request, that he will not accuse me of recommending this plan to the notice of the present administration, or of asserting that it might be carried on to doomsday, or that, in any instance, it might be resorted to, with wonderful advantage, among those who have *no* capital; or even, that it would not be attended with immediate distress, and, if persisted in, with eventual ruin. I could, perhaps, calculate the number of years that such a system might be supported; but this I shall leave to his industry to discover. It is enough for me, if my demonstration apply for one year. This gentleman has, in his own opinion, acted very cleverly, and as conscientiously as circumstances seemed to him to admit. He changed *sufferings and burdens* into *taxes*, evidently, that he might have an opportunity of exercising his wit at my expence; but, from a shallowness of intellect, he did not perceive the full scope of the argument, and, as frequently happens in these intentional deviations from what is just, the ridicule, which he was so eager to heap upon me, has fallen upon himself.

dicating

dicating the other. I must, however, beg leave to add, since I have been drawn into this explanation, that, after the specimen which he has afforded of his disposition and his talents, I am neither to be provoked by his censure, nor gratified by his praise. Although tenacious of my own opinions, I can, at the same time, in most instances, respect the opinions of others. Men are, indeed, governed in their sentiments by so many various prejudices, and accidental causes, that the most opposite views of a subject may frequently be espoused and defended, with nearly equal plausibility, by their respective advocates. There is, however, in society, a particular class of people, who, from an implacable spirit of opposition, are uniformly pre-determined to differ; who, when they cannot reason, are resolved, at all events, to cavil; and who, in their ineffectual struggles to gain their point, will resort to any mode of attack. Of this class our critic is, apparently, a member, and for the decisions of such people, it is not in my nature to feel much deference. That my political principles are completely

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at variance with his, he has sufficiently proved; but he has proved nothing else. That they are wrong, remains to be shewn. In the interim, I have ample authority for maintaining them, as I hold them in common, not only with the great majority of the British nation, but with many of the best and wisest men of which this country has to boast; and whatever weight this gentleman may, in his own judgment, attach to his own understanding, it is not, I can assure him, by such wit, or such argument, or such eloquence, as he has, on this occasion, produced, that they are in danger of being shaken.

LONDON,
March 21, 1807.

T. Gillet, Printer, Wild-court.

PLAIN FACTS;

OR

A REVIEW

OF THE

CONDUCT

OF

THE LATE MINISTERS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A POSTCRIPT.

THIRD EDITION,

CORRECTED.

LONDON:

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1807.

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PLAIN FACTS,

&c.

ON the sudden secession or dismissal of any set of men from the government of the country, it is natural to take a retrospective survey of their ministerial acts, that we may ascertain, whether their removal ought to be matter of public congratulation or regret. It is also natural to enquire into the cause of their removal. The first question involves a vast variety of investigation, in which the talents and conduct of these men must necessarily be brought under discussion. The second question, which, in most cases, would be a mere matter of curiosity to be satisfied by a plain statement of facts, has, in the instance before us, derived uncommon importance from the circumstances which have attended it.

The late administration was the consequence of Mr. Pitt's death. When the dissolution of that illustrious and ever-to-be-lamented statesman happened, his Majesty

sent to Lord Grenville to take his advice on the formation of a new ministry. Lord Grenville, who, during Mr. Pitt's life, had separated himself from his former protector and colleague, and had stubbornly declined every invitation to return to office without the joint admission of Mr. Fox, it was not to be supposed would give up Mr. Fox, when the liberty of selection was at his disposal. Thus Mr. Fox and his friends, after a violent opposition of two-and-twenty years, came into power, and on such triumphant terms, that nearly the whole of the patronage of the state was surrendered into their hands. It will not be easily forgotten, how greedily their situations were in the first instance seized on, and with what little delicacy or discrimination, matters were subsequently managed. Officers, who had never been displaced before, were turned out without ceremony, to make room for fresh candidates; and such were the multitude and the earnestness of applications, that numbers were left unprovided for, and consequently unsatisfied. Most of them were, however, gradually pacified by promises, and conceiving that this junto was firmly fixed in their dominion, they did not deem it prudent to espouse the

cause of a feeble opposition. The country, indeed, confiding in the splendour of their talents, and still greater splendour of their promises, was disposed to overlook their avarice; and, in the anticipation of future advantage, was willing to pardon actual inconvenience. Excuses were, in all quarters, gratuitously framed for them. It was natural, it was said, after so long and arduous a struggle for power, to be a little elated by its possession. It was natural, after such strong and unwearied proofs of attachment, to desire to reward the fidelity of friends. Much good was, nevertheless, to be expected from their exertions; abuses were to be reformed, and systems either changed or amended. They had been the able advocates, and were, no doubt, the stedfast friends of popular freedom. They loved the constitution, as it was established at the revolution, which placed William III. on the throne. They were not only men of general information and unremitting activity, but they were sound politicians and enlightened statesmen; and, moreover, they concentered in their persons, all the leading interests and distinguished talents of the state. This was the account which they also industriously circulated of

themselves; and the multitude, ever prone to novelty, gave credit to their assertions. Let us now, by the examination of facts, weigh their merits in the scales of impartiality, and ascertain in what degree they have corresponded with their own lofty professions, or with the nation's hopes.

The lust of lucre and of power, a submission to personal advantage and to favoritism, combined with an obstinate adherence to a few of their original tenets, were, throughout their administration, their governing principles; and to these principles they, in many instances, most flagrantly sacrificed the essential interests of their country.

The first public effort of these gentlemen, after their accession to power, was to get through parliament an act, enabling Lord Grenville to hold the auditorship of the exchequer, with the situation of first lord of the treasury, in which they succeeded, and by which his lordship became auditor of his *own* accounts. The next public effort, in which they also succeeded, was to enable Lord Ellenborough, the chief justice of the King's Bench, to hold a seat in the cabinet, empowering him to hear *ex parte* evidence; to be prosecutor in his ministerial capacity in a

cause, which, in his judicial capacity, he might afterwards have to try; and, consequently, to blend in the same person the irreconcileable characters of accuser, jury, and judge. Both these measures have been so amply discussed, in and out of parliament, and are, on the very face of them, such glaring violations of constitutional law, coming home so forcibly to every man's common sense, that it cannot be necessary to make any comment on them here. They are, however, alone quite sufficient to prove, how very differently the Foxites thought and felt, in opposite situations. Had two such innovations, in former times, been only hinted at, these sturdy patriots would have reprobated them in the severest language, as dangerous and unjust encroachments on our most sacred privileges, and would have sounded the alarm from one end of the kingdom to the other. But the moment they could be converted to their personal advantage, the danger and the injustice vanished, and they received their most strenuous support. Such a sudden and total dereliction of principles and professions, was sufficient to open the eyes of every one to their motives; and clearly explained, why they had been so clamorous in support-

ing what they denominated the unalienable rights of the people, when in opposition; and why they were so eager to surrender those rights, when in power.

These difficult points being settled, by which two of their leading men were rivetted to their interests, some time was taken up in subordinate official arrangements; in discarding old servants of the public, to make room for old friends of the party. Every office was absolutely ransacked; and such was the indiscriminate voracity of the candidates, that the lowest stations were accepted with the keenest avidity. So little delicacy, or even decornm, was displayed in many of these changes, that, in various instances, the credit of the administration was deeply disgraced. Even in the higher departments, the strangest anomalies were committed, and such urgent claims were preferred from different quarters, that considerable confusion was every where apparent. Mr. Fox was so incessantly besieged by the numerous clan of his old and needy associates; so many obscure adventurers were petitioners to his bounty; that he is reported to have one day exclaimed, in the anguish of his heart, "What, in God's name, can I do

more? we are already three in a bed." It was however, at last determined, among other *discreet* appointments, that Mr. Sheridan should be treasurer of the navy, and Mr. Davison treasurer of the ordnance; that Mr. Tierney, who had been tossed about like a shuttlecock from one party to the other, should be at the head of the board of controul; that the great seal of Scotland should be taken from the Duke of Gordon, and consigned to the custody of the Earl of Lauderdale; that Mr. Erskine, who had scarcely ever been in the court of chancery, even as a visitor, should be raised to the dignity of lord high chancellor; that General Fox, who had already received one of the most lucrative military appointments in the king's gift, should commence a diplomatic carcer, and supersede Mr. Elliot as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary at the court of Palermo; that Mr. Singleton, Lord Cornwallis's son-in-law, and the only connection of that illustrious nobleman in the employ of government, should be supplanted, at the ordnance office, by Colonel Mac Mahon; and that George Hanger, in remuneration for his long and faithful services, should be gra-

tified with a troop of horse artillery worth 1000*l.* per annum.

Scarcely were these arrangements completed, when negotiations for peace were entered upon with France. The history of these negotiations has been before the public, and every one knows how strangely they were commenced, how strangely they were protracted, and how strangely they were terminated. They fortunately did not lead to that worst of all consequences, a revolutionary peace; but they as certainly, for the six months of their duration, by relaxing the exertions, were detrimental to the interests of the country. Whether or not our ministers were duped by the artifices of Talleyrand, must continue matter of opinion; but surely Talleyrand could have wished for no more advantageous result from his pretended desire of tranquillity, than the apathy, which, during these tedious conferences, characterized the British government.

Buonaparte had already resolved on his attack on Prussia. It was evidently, therefore, to him, an object of high importance, to conceal his design from us, and, by his assurances, to fortify the hope, which our Cabinet had so groundlessly conceived, and

to which it so foolishly adhered—that peace was at hand. The constant ambiguity and prevarication of the French government, added to their eternal shifting from basis to basis, were, however, one should have thought, sufficient indications of the ultimate issue, and, many months before the negotiations were broken off, would have opened the eyes of men, less infatuated in favour of *French* honesty, and less insensible to the dignity and the interests of their own country.

Blind and inert, however, as they were, Buonaparte's precipitate departure from Paris, with his confidential minister, the deep-plotting Talleyrand, leaving a very subordinate agent to adjust matters with the British ambassador, did begin to awaken suspicion in their breasts, and to present to their hitherto obscured optics, a glimmering outline of the scene which was speedily to ensue. The King of Prussia's fate was soon determined, and although it was to be chiefly ascribed to his own obstinate folly, as well as to the treachery, cowardice, avarice, and stupidity, which prevailed in his cabinet and in his army; yet it must also be acknowledged, that our ministers, with the exertion of a little more fore-

sight and diligence, a little more ingenuity and address, and a little more distrust of the views of the French government, might have procured that degree of information, and have resorted to that mode of action, which would have paved the way to more fortunate circumstances. The Prussian monarch, destitute both of aid and of council, was at once overwhelmed, and, about a fortnight after the commencement of hostilities, he was a fugitive in the eastern provinces of his dominions. Had it not been for the generous interposition of Russia, he was, beyond redemption, lost. It is, therefore, entirely to be attributed to the magnanimity of the Russian Emperor, sustained by the fidelity, the gallantry, and the genius of the officers, directing the intrepid valour of his troops, that the European Continent has been rescued from total subjugation. Buonaparte has found in Bennigsen an adversary every way able to cope with him, and this novice in command, has hitherto, in every encounter, foiled his efforts, and eclipsed his military fame.

What, however, was the conduct of the late ministers at this awful and eventful

epoch, which, during their continuance in office, was protracted through a period of nearly six months? What assistance did they administer to the support of Russia? What measures did they adopt to conciliate the monarch of that powerful country; to stimulate him to a continuance of exertion; to prevent him from retiring from the contest in disgust? What did they do, to induce him to persevere in a struggle, which, cordially persisted in, may yet possibly enable Europe to return to law, religion, civilization and repose; which may yet hurl the tyrants of France, Holland, and Naples, from the seat of usurpation and violence; and which may yet restore their thrones to the rightful owners? What, I ask, did they do, to effect this mighty purpose? What aid did they contribute towards the accomplishment of an object, which seemed once more attainable, and on which the happiness and tranquillity of the present race, and of future generations, so essentially depend? Did they provide men? Did they even provide money?* Did they

* The paltry sum of 80,000*l.* was, indeed, sent to the King of Prussia; but his supplication for 120,000 stand of arms, with which he might have equipped as many soldiers against Buonaparte, was haughtily rejected. Even the petition from Russia

pursue any line of conduct which was likely to link in closer union the interests and views of the two empires? Grand expeditions were indeed talked of, and several thousand soldiers were, for many weeks, detained on board of transports (from which they were repeatedly disembarked and re-embarked) to the great detriment of their health, and the great inconvenience of the service, independently of the enormous expence which was incurred. But, after all these delusive demonstrations, was a single man sent to that destination, where his presence was likely to be serviceable to the common cause? A large army of British troops was assembled in Sicily, but to what purpose; except to waste their time in inactivity, and to reflect some additional lustre on the insignificance of the court of Palermo? Whilst making this observation, I am not forgetful of the gallant achievements of our little army in Calabria, or of the transcendent merits of the officer to whom the command was entrusted. The battle of Maida has immortalized the memory of Sir John Stuart, and, as long as time

(our only remaining important ally) to negotiate a loan of two millions sterling in this country, on her own security, was refused. Such was the wretched policy of our late ministers!

shall last, will associate his name with every heroic virtue. But whilst I admire this brilliant exploit; whilst I sincerely participate in the joy, the glory, and the pride of it, I may still be allowed to inquire, in what way it has been serviceable to us in a political view. It has, no doubt, afforded one additional confirmation of the opinion which we have always maintained, of the superiority of British over French troops. But this opportunity might have presented itself to greater advantage elsewhere; and, in other respects, what have been its consequences? Has it infused into the breasts of the Calabrians any additional spirit? has it prevented their country from falling a prey to the usurper of the throne of Naples? or were there, at any period, reasonable grounds of expectation, that it would be attended with such effects? Had this army, now swelled to 30,000 men, been landed at a seasonable time in the north of Germany, or the north of Italy; or had it co-operated with the Russians in Dalmatia; or had it, at such a moment as this, been thrown on the coast of Holland or Sweden; or had it even been kept in England, to undertake, during the absence of the military strength and talents of France, some

daring enterprize against that country; something might have been achieved more worthy of their ardent and patriotic zeal, and more detrimental to the operations of an insatiate and implacable foe.

It is indeed altogether unaccountable, and betrays, either the most stupid ignorance, or the most unpardonable sloth, and will, no doubt become a subject of parliamentary inquiry, that, during the six eventful months, which Buonaparte had been absent from France, after having completely drained it of regular troops; that with the absolute and undisputed dominion of the seas; that with the treasures and strength of this powerful empire at their disposal; no one enterprize should have been undertaken, or even thought of, hostile to that kingdom. Whilst Buonaparte was fighting with the *whole* of his military force, at the distance of above a thousand miles from any part of the British islands, our late governors could not surely have been so very simple as to entertain fears of a sudden invasion? Why then, was not some plan concerted, which, in all human probality, would have been crowned with success. If it had failed in its complete accomplishment, it could not have failed alto-

gether. It would, at least, have occasioned a diversion in favour of our allies: it would have distracted Buonaparte's attention: it would have alarmed his fears: and, even in that way, must have been productive of consequences highly advantageous to the common cause. Had we wanted our troops back, our ships were always in readiness, and the loss which we were likely, even under partial disappointment to suffer, could never, by any sound politician, be placed in competition with the benefits which, in the event of full success, would have been indisputably insured. But our government seem to have totally forgotten one sound maxim in politics: that, without risk, no great achievement can be performed. So little did the boldness of enterprise mingle with their deliberations, that, for the thirteen months during which they held the reins of empire, the strength and resources of the state were completely paralyzed, and Great Britain, with her mighty revenue, her powerful armies, and her invincible fleets, accomplished little more than might have been expected from the puny exertions of some petty state.

If we extend our view to remote parts of the globe, nothing of a favourable com-

plexion is still to be perceived; nothing which is indicative of concert or of foresight, or which stamps, even on failure, the mark of intellectual vigour. The Cape of Good Hope, which is the only post of any importance that has lately surrendered to our arms, was acquired in consequence of an armament fitted out by their predecessors in office, and the value of which, from that very circumstance, was very unbecomingly depreciated by them. Sir Home Popham's expedition against Buenos Ayres I shall not attempt to vindicate. A court martial has pronounced judgment on its merits; and although, if it could have been retained, it might have been rendered a valuable acquisition, yet, unauthorized as it was by the government, and even unknown, it certainly, with such an inadequate force, must be allowed to have partaken of the character of a rash experiment. But how happened it, that these gentlemen, until they heard of its loss, were so delighted with its capture; and that, in their joy at the intelligence of its possession, they overlooked the disobedience of orders by which it had been gained? How happened it, that, if they considered it as untenable, they encouraged our merchants and

manufacturers to engage in commercial intercourse with it; and that, in their apparent zeal to promote this association of interests, they seemed almost to lose sight of the rancorous enmity with which they had uniformly pursued the gallant officer who had been the instrument of success. It is also a curious coincidence, that, whilst they were carrying on a prosecution against the obnoxious Sir Home Popham, who stood arraigned on a charge of disobedience of orders, their favourite Colonel Craufurd should have committed a similar act of indiscretion, by which several ships have, for a time, been lost to the naval service, and for which he will also, no doubt, by and by, be made accountable.

In the West Indies all has been vapid and still. No one event of importance, either serviceable or injurious, has arisen. Nor has any thing, deserving of notice, occurred in the East Indies, except the unfortunate and melancholy business at Vellore, from all participation in which, I am happy in being able, completely to acquit the government at home.

The various diplomatic arrangements which took place, whilst they continued in power, next demand our attention. In these, the

grossest errors were committed, and persons most unfit for office were, in many instances, appointed. Among the leading characters, whom they introduced into this line, was Lord Lauderdale, a nobleman certainly not very popular in this country, and who had been an early and professed admirer of that horrible revolution, which dissolved those privileged orders of society of which he is himself a member, and which has been the prolific source of those dreadful calamities with which Europe has, for the last seventeen years, been visited. If, however, he had not been a friend to his country, he had been a friend to the party; and their gratitude deemed him worthy of reward. He was originally destined for India, and had been nominated to the highest and most lucrative post in that distant part of the empire. The objections however to him were so insurmountable, on the side of the directors of the East India Company, whose approbation is necessary to confirm the choice of his Majesty's Ministers, that, after considerable altercation, it was thought prudent to retreat from the struggle. In remuneration for this signal and mortifying disappointment, which must have conveyed to the mind of the noble lord no very flattering testimony of pub-

lic esteem, he received as a sinecure the great seal of Scotland, and was afterwards pitched upon as a proper person to conduct the negotiation which had been opened with France. The Marquis of Douglas was, about the same time, appointed ambassador at the court of St. Petersburg. A perfect novice in politics, untrained to official duties, he could not be supposed to be in possession of any of those qualifications, which, at a crisis like the present, ought to have recommended him to such a distinction. In this country he was totally unknown, except as a person who had rendered himself ridiculous by aping, in his dress, the German costume. After loitering away his time for several months in England, in choosing his service of plate, and stocking his wardrobe, he, at length, set out for his destination; and, during a residence of a few months at St. Petersburg, has contrived, completely to dissatisfy his own countrymen, and to disgust the court at which he is accredited.

Both our political and commercial connections with Russia have, indeed, been most lamentably neglected. Even the treaty of commerce which was concluded by Lord Whitworth a few years back, and which was so

likely to perpetuate a friendly intercourse between the two empires, was allowed to expire, without any provision having been effected for the protection of the British factories established in various parts of the Russian dominions. In consequence of this shameful omission, British merchants are now resident there, on the same footing as Russian subjects, the Emperor, as a despotic monarch, having it in his power to detain them, or to oppress them, as he shall think fit.* In this dilemma, they lately applied

* In obedience to a *ukase*, issued on the 1st of January last, foreign merchants, not protected by any particular treaty, among other hardships, are subjected to the following. If they do not choose to become altogether Russian subjects, they must become foreign guests, in which capacity they are liable to a heavy tax on capital; they are amenable to the town laws; they must contribute their quota of the expences and burdens of the town in which they reside; they must dispose of particular articles of commerce to particular guilds; and they must, if required, submit their commercial concerns to the inspection of the magistrates. If they wish to quit the country, they must pay a tax of ten per cent. on computed capital, instead of three years' dues; and, in addition to this, by an old law of the country, which had become obsolete, but which is again to be enforced, the town magistracy has the power of levying a tax of ten per cent. on the amount of capital supposed to be taken out of the country, without any reference to that brought in, which tax must be paid before they can be discharged from their burghership. In case of death, ten per cent. is deducted from the property bequeathed to any relation or friend resident in other countries, and various other vexatious taxes on wills, and on

to Lord Douglas, as the representative of their country, and as their natural protector, to concert the plan which it would be most adviseable to pursue, to extricate them from their difficulties. To this end, it was judged expedient to draw up a statement of the grievances to which they were exposed, and to point out those privileges which they thought themselves justified in demanding. This paper was delivered to his Excellency, that he might be thoroughly acquainted with the deplorable situation to which they were reduced; and, that he might be furnished with arguments which might be successfully urged in their favour. But what does this subtle politician do? Why this very paper, which contains many severe remarks on the Russian character, and on the constitutional rights of the Emperor, and which was submitted to him for his private inspection, that he might regulate his application by his own discretion, he presents to the Russian go-

the property of persons dying intestate are imposed. Whilst the treaty of commerce was in force, the British factory at St. Petersburg had the privilege of paying all duties, on exports and imports, in Russian coin: they are now obliged to pay in rix dollars of Holland, amounting to a difference of from ten to fifteen per cent. to their disadvantage. The only way of avoiding this, is to become a burgher.

vernment *. The ministers were naturally surprised and offended; and thus has the misunderstanding been widened, and the difficulty of adjusting it, to the satisfaction of the parties, increased. If things should long continue in this state, that part of the com-

* The memorial of the British factory at St. Petersburg to Lord Douglas, is dated 14th February 1807, and was presented on the 16th. It was accompanied with a letter of the same date, containing a few additional observations, and concluding with this remarkable caution: "the freedom with which we have offered our sentiments, we trust, the conjuncture warrants." Where so much is at stake, and the danger so imminent for ourselves, our friends, and our country, a frank representation of what we fear as well as of what we feel, will surely be excused, not to say approved, by your Lordship, and by his Majesty's ministers in England. To them, therefore, we request the favour of its being transmitted, without delay, and without reserve. In the mean time, your Lordship will judge, how the suggestions it contains can be best employed to strengthen our cause at this court, fully aware, as your Lordship no doubt must be, of the extreme delicacy requisite in regard to committing either the factory or its deputies with a government, which as yet recognizes no right in any class, even of natives, to arraign the conduct of a minister; much less to discuss the mandate of a Sovereign."

After such a caution, what must have been the astonishment and alarm of the British factory, when, on the following day, February 17th, they received a letter from their Ambassador, beginning in these terms?

"Gentlemen,

"I will not, nor is it necessary to compliment you on the memorial I received yesterday, when I inform you, that I sent it to his Excellency General Budberg with a note of mine on the same subject." &c. &c.

merce which is most advantageous to Great Britain, will be infallibly forfeited. All our substantial merchants will withdraw as fast as they can wind up their concerns; and the trade will be transferred to the management of a set of needy or desperate adventurers. To repair the mischief which has been produced, it is to be hoped that our present ministers will be able to prevail on Lord Leveson Gower to take his immediate departure for St. Petersburg. His political knowledge, joined to his conciliating manners, and the personal esteem with which the Emperor has already honoured him, may yet be able to remedy what has been done by the incapacity of Lord Douglas, and to fortify the friendly intercourse which has so long existed, and which it is so important to the interests of both empires to preserve. This indeed is a moment at which Great Britain stands in peculiar need of a man of experience, moderation, and address. It is very well known, and for reasons which I do not chuse to mention, that the French party at St. Petersburg, at the head of which is the dowager Empress, has lately been gaining ground, and we must be aware how expert they are at intrigue, and how well they understand to turn

any cause of coolness or dissatisfaction to their advantage. The Emperor, however, is fortunately alive to his interests, and may still be induced to combine them effectually with ours.

At the court of Vienna, a court, which, however fallen in dignity, still prides itself on the antiquity of its nobility, the splendour of its appearance, and the forms of its ceremonial, the son of an army surgeon was commissioned to represent the dignity of the British nation. I shall not stop to inquire by what ties, either Mr. Adair or his father, were originally united to Mr. Fox's party; but I know that Mr. Adair the son, some years back, during a serious difference pending between this country and Russia, was dispatched by Mr. Fox, as a kind of authorized agent from the Opposition, to the Empress Catharine; and it was for this reason, that the present King of Sweden, when Mr. Adair was appointed to succeed Mr. Pierrepoint, for which office, he was originally destined, absolutely refused to receive him. He said, that a man, who had been employed against the interests of his own country for the promotion of party views, was an unfit person to reside, in a public character, at his court.

At Constantinople, Mr. Arbuthnot has been allowed to make a solitary opposition to Sebastiani, and five or six more active intelligent Frenchmen, who, by their intrigues, have completely overpowered the British influence in the Divan. Matters have been carried to extremities, and a rupture between the two countries has already taken place. When we consider the signal obligations by which the Porte was bound to Great Britain; the causes of distrust and irritation, which naturally alienated it from France; this revolution in their political connexions, certainly bespeaks much mismanagement on our part. And at such a moment as the present, when it is so essential to the welfare of Europe, that Russia should be undisturbed on her southern frontier; and of such consequence to ourselves, as a commercial nation, that no fresh commercial power should range itself on the side of our enemies; it is to be doubly regretted *.

* The energy which has lately been displayed by our fleet at Constantinople, if the force be adequate to secure the object in view, I must, in common with others, applaud. About the result we are still however anxious; and, should we not succeed, the mischief will evidently be greater than if no attempt had been made. It must also be allowed, that, by previous good management, not only the losses, confusion, and alarm, to which the commercial

Of infinitely higher importance however to ourselves, were our arrangements with America. But to render our views, in that quarter, as liable to defeat as possible, Mr. Merry was recalled, and our interests were committed to the talents and discretion of

world has been subjected, might have been spared: that the ships, detained before Constantinople, might have been wielding the weapons of destruction elsewhere; and, above all, that the Russian army, which has been employed in overrunning European Turkey, might have been co-operating with their brethren against the foe of mankind, on the banks of the Vistula.

The capture of Monte Video is also an event which has diversified the dull uniformity of inaction. The service has been ably and gallantly performed. For this, however, we are indebted to our soldiers and sailors, who, under all circumstances, acquit themselves in a manner worthy of the national character. But what are we to say of a government, that sends out an expedition of this kind, to take a foreign settlement regularly fortified, and amply garrisoned, so insufficiently provided with gun-powder that, on the ninth day's siege, Admiral Stirling writes in his dispatch: "the defence made by the enemy, protracted the siege longer than was expected, and reduced our stock of powder so low, that the king's ships with all the transports, and what a fleet of merchantmen had for sale, could not have furnished a further consumption for more than two days, when a practicable breach was fortunately made, and on the 3d instant, early in the morning, the town and citadel were most gallantly carried by storm."—(See Gazette, dated Downing-street, April 12th.) So that, had not a breach been *fortunately* made, or had the Spaniards held out *two days* longer, we must have inevitably been obliged to withdraw. This is a piece of information to which the public would of course never have had access, had our late *wise* ministers continued in office.

one of Lord Erskine's sons, a young man without knowledge or experience, married to an American lady, and having a father who has invested, in the funds of the United States, the greatest part of his property, and who, before he was Chancellor, was in the habit of recommending all his clients, and all his friends, to settle there, as the only region of the globe where rational freedom could be enjoyed. On what principles of policy such an appointment could have taken place, I am at a loss to discover. Possibly, indeed, it was considered prudent to make it perfectly agreeable to America, and to regard the wishes of Great Britain as of secondary moment. Certain it is, that concessions most unworthy of our honour, and most injurious to our interests, have already been submitted to. The navigation laws, which have, in the opinion of all the most eminent political writers, so long been the foundation and the support of our naval glory and our commercial prosperity, have received a fatal blow. Our rights, as a belligerent, to stop, search, and detain, neutral vessels, and to prevent them from becoming the carriers of the colonial property of our enemies, have been most unwisely surrendered, and by the

new regulations which have been introduced into the maritime code in favour of the Americans, they, conjointly with the French, Spaniards, and Dutch, whom they assist, reap all the advantage, and we suffer all the inconvenience and the loss.*

* Since the American intercourse bill, a treaty has been agreed on between our government and the American minister in London, extending still further these injurious privileges. By this treaty, they are allowed openly to carry the colonial produce of France and Spain to the mother country, provided it is first taken to America, and pays to the American government a duty of two per cent, which is to be admitted as a proof of a change of property. In this manner will our *declared* enemies, by the intervention of our *secret* enemies, receive the produce of their colonies at half the expence, at which we, as absolute masters of the sea, can receive ours. The trade of the East Indies is also to be thrown open to these commercial rivals. Such are the indulgences which we grant to America, in consequence of her insolence, ingratitude, and injustice towards us; and at a moment when she is exercising all her malevolence against our manufactures by her non-importation regulations. But what is still more surprising, and will scarcely be credited, so tender have our late ministers been of giving offence, so fearful of exciting American wrath, that not a word is mentioned in this treaty about our right to claim British sailors from American ships, which are known to contain many thousands of these brave and invaluable defenders of their country. Is not this silence a proof of a virtual abandonment of this important point? Is it not a proof that our government, subdued by a criminal pusillanimity, has been afraid to protect their countrymen, and to assert our unquestionable right on a subject which so vitally concerns us? Has not the American government naturally enough drawn this inference from our dastardly fears; and is it not said, notwithstanding the treaty is in every respect, where it is explanatory, so fa-

In the whole of our diplomatic system, there are, in truth, many radical and striking defects, to the existence of which our being so frequently overreached by other courts is chiefly to be ascribed. These offices, of such material importance, are in general bestowed either as matter of favour to personal friends, or in consequence of parliamentary interest. It thus rarely happens that the persons appointed are regularly bred to the business which they undertake. When even a fit man, both in point of talents and rank, is placed at the head of an embassy, he is so unaided in his labours, that whatever his diligence and activity may be, he cannot be expected to keep pace with the tribe of his opponents. The French missions, on the contrary, have not only uniformly an intelligent and enterprising person as a leader, but he is assisted by five or six subordinate agents, equally conversant in the management of affairs, mining and countermining, obtaining information, securing interests, and

vourable to them, and so injurious to us, that, arguing from our meek submission on other points, and from the evident cowardice which our silence betrays on this, they now refuse to ratify the agreement *in toto*, unless we formally consent to this additional degradation. Fortunately for the interests of this country, America has now a firmer government to deal with.

intriguing with success, wherever their talents can possibly penetrate. Supposing, therefore, that the chiefs of these separate missions be completely on an equality, as to personal qualifications, we should still be outnumbered; and this very circumstance must ever render the full benefit of our endeavours extremely hazardous. To the principal courts of Europe some person of high consideration in the state, some person worthy of representing such a nation as this, should be sent, and under him should be placed several men of information, and industry, acquainted with the manners, language, and politics of foreign countries. Men of this description, it is said, are with difficulty found. This may be the case, as matters are at present managed; but such men are in abundance, and although they might decline serving under the heads of our present legations; yet if people of real distinction could once be induced to take the lead, whose rank and character would reflect a lustre on all in employment under them, the objection would be removed. It is easy to conceive that a man of talents, experience, and even fortune, would think himself honoured in contributing his assistance under Lord Malmesbury, Lord St.

Helens, or Lord Whitworth, who would not submit to be tutored by Mr. Adair, Mr. Erskine, or Mr. Wynn.

In the conduct of our domestic concerns, two grand measures, one of military arrangement, the other of finance, chiefly attract our attention. On both of them, which indeed must ever be the case in matters that embrace such an extensive field of speculation, there is great contrariety of opinion. The former was, I fancy, the exclusive bantling of the late War Secretary, to whose department it belonged: the latter, which was the production of the aggregate skill of the cabinet, was merely introduced by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. With regard to the first measure, it is not surprising that it should be characterised by a few peculiar features; and that it should partake, in some degree, of the strange prejudices and obstinate absurdities of its speculative author. He, who had so long been talking of a plan, and boasting of his own superior skill in the contrivance of one, before he came into office, could not, with any degree of credit, shrink from the task, when his situation enabled him to exhibit what he had promised to produce. So completely, however, was he puzzled,

amid the intricacies of schemes and systems; so completely blind or doubtful, as to the effects which they might respectively generate; that he hesitated long before he redeemed his pledge; and had he been less jeered and goaded by his adversaries in parliament, he would no doubt have been very well satisfied to have left the matter at rest. But his reputation for ingenuity was now at stake, and a plan it was necessary to bring forth. Whether it was a good one, or a bad one, was of little consequence, so as it was a plan; so as it had something to distinguish it from that which had been with him a source of the most vulgar ridicule, and against which he had incessantly declaimed. After so long a pregnancy, even an abortion was better than nothing. Such I verily believe is the authentic history of its birth, and, as its properties were developed, it betrayed its parent's defects. Many of the provisions of this absurd, oppressive, and complicated production, the Right Honourable Gentleman never ventured to enforce; and the nation is not now likely to be called upon to obey them. The only clause in the bill, entitled to approbation, was that which introduced recruiting for limited service, an experiment which was undoubtedly worthy of trial.

But even this was pushed too far, and it might have been easily adopted, under particular limitations, without affecting a radical alteration in the constitution of our army. Mr. Pitt's bill, many parts of which were admirable, might have been partially amended, without being totally annulled; and if Mr. Windham had been governed more by the sober spirit of rational inquiry, and less by the pride, the jealousy, and the irritable passions which reside in his breast, and which are constantly propelling him to some ridiculous or dangerous innovation, he might have more justly claimed the gratitude of his country. And what are we to say to his impolitic and illiberal treatment of the volunteers, men, who, whatever was their military skill, had come forward at a moment of unparalleled peril; and who, at considerable expence and personal inconvenience, had offered to devote themselves to the service of their country? How would the nations of antiquity have regarded their children thus disposed! How would the orators of antient Greece and Rome have commended their patriotism, have stimulated their zeal, and have celebrated their virtues! Is not, in modern times, America indebted to such bands for

her independence, and, by the assistance of such bands, did not the republics of Holland, of Switzerland, and even of France, acquire and consolidate their power? Were these generous citizens then fit objects of selection for the exercise of the splenetic passions of a British senator? Were they a proper theme for the taunts and satire of his malignant tongue, for the sarcasms of irony, the severity of rebuke, and the bitterness of contempt? Let Mr. Windham recollect that every individual among these patriots has a country to which he is attached by every tie of affection, interest, and duty; and that he also possesses a soul as well able to appreciate (and better, perhaps, inclined to *appreciate properly*) the glorious distinctions by which his native land is blessed, as that which animates the breast of the Right Honourable Gentleman. Had Buonaparte entertained the same opinions of the spirit and the use of the volunteers, which Mr. Windham has so industriously circulated, he would long since have invaded this island; and, had he entertained them justly, he would long since have conquered it.* Let us hope

* Whilst making this remark, I am not ignorant of the great superior value of regular troops, nor am I at all disposed to depreciate that value; but there was a time when our regular army in England was reduced to a handful of men.

that the present Administration may yet be able to repair the mischief which Mr. Windham has so indiscreetly occasioned.*

Lord Henry Petty's financial scheme presents, it must be acknowledged, at first view, less to object to than Mr. Windham's mili-

* But what, except mischief, could the most zealous among Mr. Windham's adherents expect from a man of his peculiar cast? from a man in whose breast no amiable or generous affection resides? Can this country ever forget his ingratitude to his friend and protector Mr. Pitt? Can any inhabitant of this country ever forget, that, on the motion in parliament for a public funeral in honour of this departed and illustrious statesman, Mr. Windham, not only voted against it, but declared that, during the seven years which he had acted with him in the cabinet, he had disapproved of the bulk of his measures, giving the public to understand, that he had conceded his opinions to preserve his place. Nor was this all. He not only voted himself, but he exerted all his unaccountable influence among his new friends, to prevail on them to join with him in this act of barbarous animosity. Even the kind and generous nature of Mr. Fox was entrapped by his artifices. Who can, after this, ever allow to Mr. Windham any claim to the character of greatness? Who can, after this, ever admire, or love, or respect him? Envy, which corrodes every noble impulse of our nature, is the animating spring of his action, is the consuming passion which has degraded his talents, and frittered away his reputation. Mr. Windham has chivalry in his head, but not in his heart. He may resemble Don Quixote in selecting his object, and in planning his attack, but here the likeness ends. He has nothing of the kindness of temper, of the courtesy of demeanour, of the facility of disposition, which compensated for the fanciful extravagancies of that renowned knight, and which induce us to excuse, in consideration of his many amiable and attractive qualities, the errors of a perverted judgment.

tary scheme, and if it be as replete with errors, the outward features of it are certainly less repulsive. Assurances of the speedy diminution of the national debt open a cheering prospect to our contemplation, and the relief from additional taxes, even for one year, cannot be otherwise than palatable to all descriptions of people. All the sound parts, however, of Lord Henry Petty's plan have incontestably been raised on those foundations which were laid by his illustrious predecessor, and the same main props and grand sub-divisions are every where visible. Mr. Pitt, who was, beyond all dispute, the greatest political arithmetician which this country, or indeed any other, ever produced, framed the entire ground-work of our financial prosperity; and although much improvement and additional precision may, no doubt, be still introduced into the innumerable ramifications of so extensive and intricate a system, yet any departure from the basis, or from the chief outlines, will, I am persuaded, in proportion to the deviation, be found on experiment erroneous.

Notwithstanding the late Ministers, whilst in opposition, had been excessively vehement in depreciating the value of funded

property, and in holding up our pecuniary resources to the public, as reposing on a very frail foundation, yet when they came into power, they were, in their own defence, compelled to do justice to Mr. Pitt's fame, and to acknowledge their former misrepresentations.

It was still, however, a great object of ambition with Lord Henry Petty, and a very laudable ambition it would have been, had he not endeavoured to feed it by detracting from the superior merits of another, to surpass Mr. Pitt in that branch of political economy, for the management of which he was so eminently celebrated. The sinking fund and the war taxes, measures which Mr. Pitt originated, and which formed the substantial basis of his financial system, it was judged dangerous to remove. Considerable innovations were however made in other respects, and much legerdemain was practised to induce the nation to believe what it nevertheless continues to doubt. Lord Henry Petty, misled perhaps by others, with the fervour of a young and inexperienced mind, imagined that a mode of liquidating the public debt had been discovered, which would throw Mr. Pitt's calculations completely in the shade, and create for himself an unclouded and im-

mortal reputation. That his prognostications might derive importance from the space of time which they occupied, he predicted all that was to happen for twenty years to come; little reflecting, that any man who, in this mysterious age, pretends to forecast the events of such a lengthened period, must, to a moral certainty, be wrong. The data on which he builds his system, being governed by contingent circumstances, must with those circumstances infallibly vary. What, in fact, can be more absurd, than to imagine that our trade will, for the next twenty years, remain at its present extent, when we know, that the unexampled prosperity which it has reached, is, in a great degree, occasioned by the peculiar circumstances of a war, which has expelled all our old commercial rivals from the field of competition? Yet on suppositions such as this depends the solidity of his Lordship's expectations. In order also to make it look prettier on paper, he has omitted placing on the debit side of the account, foreign subsidies, and army extraordinaries, two enormous drains, which must unavoidably be felt as long as the war continues. He also, by the trick of his supplementary loans, borrows from one fund

what he redeems in another, and under this striking disadvantage, that he borrows at compound interest. Lord Henry Petty's promises are then a mere delusion; for what is paid into one hand is taken from the other, an operation by which, it is clear, nothing can be saved, and which is only likely to occasion the introduction of error and confusion. Even the exoneration from taxes is not entitled to that general approbation which the feelings of those individuals, who, delighted with immediate benefits, disregard future evils, have led them to bestow. It has at least been so far premature, that if, after all, our situation should require additional burdens, they will now be granted with much additional reluctance. By the sudden change in the administration, his Lordship will escape the odium, but he will have been the sole cause of the mischief. So very flimsy and inaccurate have been his calculations; so childishly desirous has he shewn himself of holding out to the nation false hopes, that even in the few weeks which intervened, between the submission of his plan, and the opening of his budget, he discovered the necessity of adding 3,000,000 to the 12,200,000 which he had confidently declared would be

adequate to the exigencies of the Exchequer. But he was in quest of popularity, and he wanted to give some convincing proof to the nation, that the grasp of his comprehension left his predecessor far behind. He was thus resolved, at all events, to risk the experiment, and he determined that the country should, for one year at least, be exonerated from taxes. A bold and wise statesman would, on the contrary, have proceeded in his task, ungracious as it was, and would manfully have encountered the evil, till he could have relieved from it with certainty. If he erred, he would have erred with safety, inasmuch as it is far better to continue a burden than to renew it after a temporary remission; and when it became prudent to remove it altogether, the accumulation of the overplus would have proportionably increased the benefit.

I now come to a very important part of this discussion, viz. the cause which immediately occasioned the late ministerial revolution. It has been, on both sides, a good deal misrepresented by party zeal. One one side, much of the truth has been suppressed; on the other, it has been somewhat exaggerated. It is, however, particularly inte-

resting to the British public, that the question should be fairly before them, and that the King's character, which, in many instances, has been so freely handled, and in some so grossly reviled, should be vindicated by a plain statement of the facts as they arose.

It had, avowedly, been long in the contemplation of his Majesty's late Ministers, to enlarge the privileges of the Irish Roman Catholics. Lord Grenville had himself, in the month of April 1805, pleaded their cause in the House of Peers, and he had been powerfully assisted in his object by his late colleagues in both Houses of Parliament. Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville entertained, on this point, similar sentiments, and it is well known, that, in the year 1801, they, with several other distinguished characters, resigned the administration of public affairs, in consequence of the decided opposition which they met with in the highest quarter, and which created an impossibility of carrying their wish into execution. When the administration of Lord Sidmouth was dissolved, Mr. Pitt was again called to the councils of his sovereign, and his great and generous soul, which was ever ready to submit

to personal sacrifices for the good of his country, easily devised a mode of reconciling the suspension of his private opinion with the discharge of his public duty. In the memorable debate which took place on this interesting topic, it was explicitly declared, both by Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, that no pledge had been given by them to the Catholics; so that they both stood completely absolved from any charge of inconsistency, in accepting, at different periods, the offer of a return to power. Whilst Mr. Pitt lived, the Catholics made no further application, either to Parliament, or to the Administration, and seemed patiently to acquiesce in the decided judgment, which had been pronounced by two branches of the Legislature, on the merits of their petition. When Mr. Fox came into office, the question was again agitated, but, aware of the insurmountable obstacle which existed, his discretion deterred him from risking a removal, and he easily persuaded the leading men among the Catholics to desist. On Mr. Fox's death, the consequence of his party, as distinguished from the Grenvilles, was totally eclipsed, and Lord Grenville became, what Mr. Fox had been, the para-

mount chief. The reserve which Mr. Fox's decided ascendancy and predominant genius had commanded from the inferior talents of his political friends; that humble deference with which his adherents bowed to his opinions, being removed; the hopes of the Catholics revived, and their zeal resumed its activity. They were well acquainted with Lord Grenville's private sentiments, and they naturally suspected, that if, through the medium of the other members of the Cabinet, they could induce him again to bring forward the subject, they should have some chance of overpowering the reluctance of the King. Strong representations were accordingly made by them to the government in Ireland, which, through his Majesty's Ministers there, were forwarded to the Cabinet in London. A correspondence commenced, in which the policy of the measure, having been fully canvassed, they at length agreed on the propriety of communicating to the King their opinion of the necessity of granting further indulgences to his Irish Roman Catholic subjects. Pursuant to their decision, this unpleasant business was forthwith opened to his Majesty, who, after much argument and solicitation, consented to ex-

tend the operation of the Irish act of 1793* to the other parts of his European empire. But this consent was not obtained without difficulty, and he concluded the conference by saying, that he gave it with reluctance, and that no consideration should induce him to go a step farther. The assurance was sufficiently positive, and the instructions were sufficiently distinct; nor, after such an explanation, was it well possible for any mistake to arise. Intelligence of this arrangement was immediately transmitted to Ireland; but it was couched in such ambiguous terms, that neither the Duke of Bedford, nor Mr. Elliot, nor the Catholics to whom it was shewn, could comprehend it. We naturally stop here, to inquire, what could have been the reason of such a want of precision in so important a document? The King's declaration admitted of no misconstruction; nor did Lord Sidmouth, Lord Erskine, or Lord Ellenborough, entertain the remotest doubt respecting its interpretation. They were all along convinced, that his Majesty never intended to go beyond the

* The Irish act of 1793 enables Irish Roman Catholics to hold commissions in the army, in Ireland, as high as the rank of general, but does not allow them to be one on the staff.

act of 1793. Was there any difficulty in explaining this to the Irish government, or were Lord Grenville, and Lord Howick, poor simple men! so totally ignorant of the import of words, as to be unable to state, in intelligible language, so clear a proposition? Yet, had they *designed* to be explicit, such would be the inference. In consequence, however, of their unaccountable want of perspicuity, the Catholics inquired of Mr. Elliot, whether *all the commissions* in the army and navy were to be thrown open to them, Mr. Elliot doubted; and, fearful of committing himself by giving a positive opinion on the subject, he wrote to England for instructions.

This dispatch from Mr. Elliot, it must be allowed, was no unimportant communication. It suggested no trifling departure from the arrangement which had been positively agreed on, between the King and his Ministers, and to which his Majesty had given his *reluctant* consent, coupling it with a declaration, that *no consideration should induce him to go a step farther.* Ministers, who were influenced by a proper respect for the opinions and the feelings of their Sovereign, and who were desirous to avoid those inconveniences which

must arise to public business, from misconception on great legislative questions, would naturally, before they replied to such a dispatch, have been very anxious for a personal interview with the King, in order precisely to ascertain his sentiments respecting it. In this stage of the affair I say, if the Ministers (who are also termed, the King's *confidential servants*) in consequence of further deliberations in the Cabinet, founded on this dispatch, had conceived additional concessions prudent, it was indisputably their bounden duty, to make his Majesty instantly acquainted with their determination, and to be certain, before any steps were taken in Parliament, that the royal compliance could be secured. So firmly convinced, however, were they of the contrary, that they deemed it best not to consult him at all, but to rely on their chance, when they had hurried the measure through the Commons and the Lords, of forcibly overpowering the King's scruples, and, by the necessity of the case, compelling his consent.

To accomplish their design a great deal of contrivance was requisite, and the following plan was at length resorted to, as most likely to insure success. It was agreed to send Mr. Elliot's dispatch to the King, unaccompanied

by any comment or notification, such as is usually attached to papers of consequence, to spare his Majesty time and unnecessary trouble, by at once informing him of the substance, and directing his attention to those particular passages which most demand it. If the observation of this general rule be requisite on any occasion, it was surely peculiarly so on the present, not only from the intrinsic importance of the dispatch, but also from their previous knowledge of the King's recent declaration. It was, notwithstanding, conveyed to him at Windsor, in one of the usual boxes, without any reference whatever. His Majesty of course considered it, as mere matter of form, as a document with the contents of which he was already acquainted, and to which he had agreed; and which, not requiring his perusal, he returned, without having opened, consequently without observation.

Now, if the omission of this usually accompanying comment had been unintentional; if it had arisen from a casual oversight committed in the hurry of business; the total silence of the King was quite sufficient, not only to excite surprise, not only to awaken suspicion that some mistake had happened,

but to create an anxiety to rectify it by a personal interview. Instead, however, of being influenced by these considerations, they do not allow themselves to entertain a doubt on the subject, but instantly interpret the total silence, on the part of his Majesty, into an unqualified consent. Having brought the affair to this stage, they no longer think it necessary to write to Ireland in *equivocal* terms; and, in their second dispatch, they inform the Lord Lieutenant, that *all commissions* in the army and navy are to be thrown open to the Roman Catholics.

Preparations were, at the same time, made to bring forward a measure in Parliament to the above effect. Before this was done, however, it was thought prudent to wait till the King came to town. This happened in a day or two; and his Majesty, in a conference which he had with Lord Howick, continuing silent on the subject, and Lord Howick cautiously avoiding it, his Lordship's opinion of his Majesty's acquiescence was confirmed, and he determined to proceed. In Lord Howick's original notice on this affair, he mentions it as a corollary to the Mutiny Bill, with a view of extending the operation of the Irish act of 1793 to Great Britain, and

of enlarging its benefits; but some objection being started to the mode, he afterwards introduced it as a separate bill. All this time, not a word concerning it, was hinted to his Majesty, nor were the three dissentient Members of the Cabinet consulted. The King came to town the following week, when he again saw Lord Howick; and on asking him what was going forward in the House of Commons, his Lordship answered, that the second reading of the bill in question was to come on that day. His Majesty instantly inquired, if it was the same as the Irish bill, and, on being informed of the addjtional provisions which it contained, he expressed his disapprobation. Finding, however, that this manifestation of his displeasure was insufficient to deter Lord Howick from proceeding, he, at length, communicated to Lord Grenville his decided objection. The bill was now necessarily suspended; and consultations being held among the Ministers, they at first attempted to modify it; but finding that impracticable, or at least incompatible with their design, they resolved to withdraw it altogether.

Here the matter might have rested, or had they thought proper to introduce a new bill,

conformable to the conditions on which his Majesty had originally agreed to grant his consent, that consent would still have been granted. But this was not enough to satisfy their lofty minds. They had already declared their pretensions, and were resolved still to look forward to an opportunity of triumphing over their Sovereign. They not only had this in contemplation, but, relying on their strength, they thought that they might safely venture to avow it. They accordingly drew up a cabinet minute, in justification of their conduct; and "they further insisted, that their present deference to his Majesty might not be understood as restraining them from submitting, for his Majesty's decision, such measures as circumstances might require, respecting the state of Ireland." They also asserted the right of supporting, by their votes and speeches in Parliament, the claims of the Irish Roman Catholics, whenever their petition should be presented. The gauntlet of defiance was now thrown down, and the declaration of hostility was sufficiently explicit. They not only tell their Sovereign, that they are, on this point, determined to oppose his opinions, and to disregard his comfort, but that they will se-

lect the time, and frame the measure, as they judge most expedient. From this moment, that confidence, which should always exist between the King and his Ministers, and without which, public business cannot be advantageously carried on, must have been destroyed, and it was their duty to resign. Liberal and constitutional men would have instantly so acted. But they, blinded by interest, did not see the affair in this light. They liked their places, and were resolved, if possible to retain them, in the King's despight. So extreme indeed was his Majesty's condescension and forbearance, that, great as the provocation was, he was inclined to pass it over, and he intimated no desire that they should quit his service. But, after the conduct which they had pursued, and the menaces which they had uttered, it did seem necessary, in order to prevent the recurrence of a similar affront, and to secure to him his peace of mind on a point of conscience which he has determined never to surrender, to require a written pledge, that they would no more disturb his repose by the agitation of this unpleasant question. This they indignantly refused to give, when his Majesty found himself obliged to take measures for

The question immediately under our consideration, has been divided by some into two heads, viz. as matter of right, and as matter of expediency. I never could perceive the necessity, or the policy of the distinction. The terms are, in this instance, blended in signification. A measure of such a nature can only be *right*, as far as it is *expedient*; that is, as far as it is consonant with the general welfare of the state. Private advantages must yield to the benefit of the community; the privileges of individuals must be regulated by public good. This is the scale which must, in all cases, be consulted. What, in fact, is legitimate power, but an aggregate fund derived from the original rights of each member of society, and which is the price that social man pays out of the stock of his natural liberty, for the protection which the laws afford him? The only mode, therefore, in my judgment, in which this question can be agitated with utility or with safety, is to endeavour so to contrive, that, if ever the concessions, which the Catholics require, should be obtained, they should be the result of conviction, and not of violence, faction, or intrigue. Some people have said: Grant this as a boon to

the Irish Catholics, and you make them your friends; withhold it, and you make them your enemies. This is presumptuous, and, I trust, erroneous language; and those who use it, whatever they may pretend to be, are no real friends to the cause which they espouse. They would extort by compulsion as a right, instead of receiving with good will as a gratuity. They would put the issue, on the strength of the suitor, and not on the justice of his claim. They would convert a question of reason into a question of blood. But lamentably weak would that government be, which could be induced to yield from such a motive; and I have no hesitation in saying, that if such a daring and unconstitutional spirit should really betray itself, so long as it existed, they ought never to be listened to. If the Catholics should ever begin stipulating for terms; if they should ever mete out loyalty by way of bargain; if they should ever threaten, that they will only remain conditionally faithful to that government which they are bound, not only by allegiance, but by every tie of interest and affection, to support; they will then have proclaimed themselves our enemies: and if concessions were submitted to

in consequence of such a demeanour, the Catholics would be triumphant, and the Protestants subdued. But that such traitorous sentiments are neither cherished nor entertained by the Catholics, I am fully persuaded; and that they should have been broached by their pretended friends, bespeaks, on the part of such advocates, neither desire of conciliation, nor sobriety of argument, nor attachment to their country.

Without entering into unnecessary argument, respecting the superior merits of a particular church, we know, from all experience, that any religion is better than none. We also know, that in most countries, out of the endless variety, one has generally been selected, to which a decided preference has been shewn by the legislature, by providing for its ministers, in a manner suitable to the opulence of the country, and the sanctity of the institution. Religion, however, of whatever description, exercises a powerful influence over the moral conduct of the world, and mingles with almost every affection of the heart, and every duty of life. It thus naturally connects itself with the civil government; for civil laws are best supported by morality, and morality derives its

chief security from a proper deference to religion. Hence in all communities the close association between church and state. Most fortunate, however, is that country, in which religion is founded on just and liberal views; for in that country, industry, liberty, toleration, good morals, and every virtue which leads to the true happiness and prosperity of society, are most likely to flourish.

When, in this country, catholicism was the creed of the national church, the weight of its power was every where felt. That unbounded authority which it assumed, and which it enforced by such cruel and arbitrary means, contributed, more than any other cause, to stifle the energies of the soul; to check the spirit of inquiry; and to retard the progress of industry, science, and freedom. The Reformation, although it had been long silently working its way, and removing, with the implements of reason, the weeds and brambles which choaked up the road to knowledge, was nevertheless produced before its time. The separation of England from the church of Rome was less the effect of moral conviction, than of the whimsical and headstrong passions, which dictated to the resolves of one of the

most odious tyrants that ever swayed the sceptre of these realms. At that time, however, the Anglican church arose, of which the king became the declared head; and notwithstanding the circumstances which attended its origin, the close connexion between church and state, which has since prevailed (a short period excepted) has essentially contributed to the security of the ecclesiastical and civil establishments of the country. The struggles which the Catholics made in the time of Elizabeth, and particularly in the time of the Stuarts, for the restoration of their faith, naturally created jealousy on the part of the Protestants; and in 1678 a test act was passed, which excluded from Parliament Catholic peers. At the glorious revolution of 1688, this restriction was continued, and it was a principal object, amidst the arduous labours of the many illustrious men, who, at that fortunate and memorable æra, led the public mind, for ever to prevent their return. They had observed, how intimately the tenets of the church of Rome were linked with the exercise and maintenance of arbitrary power, and how much the safety of a free constitution depended on the exclusion of its mem-

bers from all participation, in the enactment or the execution of the laws. As an additional rampart for the protection of civil liberty, these enlightened and patriotic statesmen unalterably regulated the royal line of succession, and secured the inheritance of the crown to a race of Protestant princes. The tests of the two preceding reigns were, at the same time, further fortified, and the church and state were, by several solemn acts, indissolubly united. Many other penal and disabling statutes were passed against the Catholics in the succeeding reigns, and it was only at the accession of his present Majesty to the throne, that the Government began to view them with less distrust. They have felt the full benefit of this favourable disposition. The penal laws against them have been gradually abrogated; their disabilities have been gradually rescinded; and they have been gradually restored to the enjoyment of religious toleration, of civil right, and of personal freedom. Every odious and burdensome restriction being thus removed, both the reason and justice of the case, as they apply to further concession, seem now to be reduced to a simple question of expedience and prudence. Some

assert, that we might grant the full extent of their claims without any risk: others contend, that it would be attended with the greatest. When there is such a wide difference of opinion; when such contrary inferences are deduced from the same premises, and by persons of equally liberal views, and of equally extensive experience; it is, at least, a proof of the difficulty of deciding right. This is a strong argument for continuing as we are. We know what our present situation is: it is difficult to foretell what it might be. We know the advantages of a Protestant church: we have every reason to dread the predominance of Popery. The Catholics must, indeed, themselves, be fully sensible of the difficulties with which this question is encumbered. They must be aware, that, interfering as it does with some of the fundamental principles of the constitution, it involves considerations of peculiar delicacy and magnitude; and that, above all, the wishes and prejudices of the Protestants, who make four-fifths of the aggregate population of our European empire, must, on a point which so nearly concerns them, be indispensably consulted.

After all, every independent government,

in the appointment of its officers, possesses an indisputable right to require that form of oath, which it deems essential to its perpetuation, and to oblige every one, who aspires at the administration of its affairs, to take it previously to his investiture of office. As in other countries, particular forms have been settled, so has one in this, by which all descriptions and ranks of people, in certain public situations, are equally bound. Is not the king himself, when he ascends the throne of his ancestors, obliged to take an oath, that he will govern according to law? Is he not equally obliged to be a Protestant; to marry a Protestant; to train up his children in the Protestant faith; and to entrust the management of public affairs to Protestant ministers? These fundamental laws of the constitution, may, by many, be considered as harsh restraints; and some future king may desire to be relieved from them; but where is the man to be found, who would be hardy enough to propose an obedience to his wish? They are, in part, the price that he pays for the crown which he wears; the power and patronage which he possesses; the privileges which he enjoys; and the allegiance which he

claims. They are a part of that security which we, as his subjects, exact; and which entitles him, in return, to our loyalty and support. That Henry the Fourth of France should have had his Sully, or the late King of France his Necker, is quite irrelevant to the purpose.* We have nothing to do with

* If, indeed, we consult the history of these two periods, we are furnished with the most cogent arguments for avoiding an imitation of such precedents. Sully, who was a Calvinist, served a master who had been educated in the same religious faith, and who, although he was publicly obliged to renounce it, continued secretly attached to it through life. At this epoch of the French history also, there had been long and bloody contests between the Roman Catholics and the Calvinists for the ascendency, and although the former prevailed, the latter continued so numerous and powerful, that it was judged prudent to admit them to their share of public employment. Sully felt, nevertheless, the full evil of these rival institutions, which, having equal claims to political power, regarded each other with a bitterness of enmity, that not only impeded the progress of improvement, but impaired the resources of the state. Being, however, a wise, just, and moderate man, one of the chief objects of his administration was to allay the animosity of theological dissentions. Had he been either a zealot or a bigot, all the horrors of religious persecution and civil war, which had so dreadfully defaced the annals of the three preceding reigns, would have been inevitably revived. If, therefore, the high and confidential post which this eminent man so long enjoyed, was unattended with mischief, it was an accidental circumstance arising out of his personal character.

The increasing distractions and jealousies, which were occasioned by the clashing interests of the rival establishments, in the two succeeding reigns, pointed out at length the necessity of a pre-

foreign maxims or foreign laws. Our great object is to watch over the preservation of our own.

We must therefore, at all events, in this very delicate and momentous concern, advance with caution. Unless such a measure as the Catholics seek to obtain, arise out of a thorough conviction of its utility among

dominant church; and were the fundamental cause of the rigour to which Louis XIV. ultimately resorted, in the revocation of the edict of Nantz. By this act, the Protestants were reduced to their former political impotence, and the folly and danger of suffering two adverse bodies, equally to participate in the administration of the government, were universally allowed.

But if these arguments have any weight against the general rule, they are infinitely stronger as to the particular case of Necker. The rashest act of Louis XVIth's reign, was calling to his councils a man, who united in his character every quality which was hostile to the government over which he was to preside. He was a foreigner, a republican, and a Protestant. The result of his administration is unfortunately too well known. By convening the destroyers of the French monarchy, he inflicted on it the mortal blow, and was the immediate instrument that gave birth to the Revolution, and brought his sovereign to the block.

Ought not then the consequences of Necker's admittance into the councils of the king of France, to be considered as a warning voice to the king of England, against a similar experiment; and do they not afford a most forcible reason, that no man, whose principles are opposite to the principles of the established laws and constitution of a country, should be allowed to direct its public affairs?

all parties, it cannot be attended with salutary consequences. By conciliatory, moderate, and progressive steps, the fears and evident repugnance of the Protestants may be insensibly diminished. But if any thing like violence or compulsion be attempted, those fears will be augmented, and that repugnance will be rendered invincible. The recollection of papal power, and of papal arrogance, with all those direful events which they produced, must be expected to act as an unceasing spur to our vigilance; and must ever make us regard the encroachments of the Catholic church with jealousy and alarm. The unconditional emancipation, indeed, at which the Catholics avowedly aspire, can never meet the approbation of a Protestant church, nor of any description of people who have a guarded attachment to the constitution of this country. Those parts of the tests which militate most directly against the leading tenets of the Roman Catholic faith, as contra-distinguished from papacy, might possibly, at some future period, be softened, or even abandoned altogether; but the supremacy of the King will, I hope, be ever maintained. I also

hope, that the direction, which the Parliament possesses over religious concerns, will never be surrendered; and that no member of the British senate will ever be allowed to permit the authority of the pope to direct his conscience, or that, when religious matters are the subject of debate, he will ever be suffered, under any pretence whatever, to apply to the conclave at Rome how to act.

From the foregoing pages, in which I have endeavoured to compress this very important subject as much as possible, it is evident that the King, in withholding his consent to the demands of the Catholics, as recently proposed to him through his Ministers, has not only exercised his just prerogative; but that he has exercised it in a manner which is congenial to the almost unanimous wishes of his Protestant subjects, as but two years ago solemnly declared, and strictly conformable to the fundamental laws of the constitution. He is bound by his coronation oath to support the Protestant church, and if he be not concerned in the interpretation of that oath, who is? If then his Majesty, in his conscience, think that any further

indulgence to the Roman Catholics, would materially shake the interests of that church, of which he is the guardian and the head; or that it would amount to a violation of that oath by which he holds his crown; what Minister is not bound to respect such a conclusion? The oaths of abjuration and supremacy are, indeed, constituent parts of the bill of rights, in which they were inserted by the Convention Parliament, as bulwarks necessary for the defence of the privileges of the people against the encroachments of the crown, and against the return of a Roman Catholic jurisdiction. Is then the King to be blamed, for refusing to grant what would amount to a renunciation of the fundamental laws of the realm, and what, had it been proposed in the time of William III. would have been matter of impeachment? Is the King to be placed so entirely at the mercy of his Ministers; is he to be so completely tied up in the trammels of non-resistance; that he is, on no occasion, to venture an opinion of his own? Suppose that his Ministers had counselled the abolition of the trial by jury; will any one pretend to say that he would have been still

bound to yield? How then is this system of compliance to be stopped, but by the King's determination to resist? Would we wish him to imitate James II. instead of William III.; or is our history so silent on the evils arising out of contentions between the King and his Parliament, that we can be indifferent about their revival?* I must, therefore, insist, that, in whatever point of view the schism between the King and his late Ministers is considered, his Majesty has acted in a manner every way worthy of his ex-

* It has been said, that the language of these times is widely different from that which was held in the days of William III. It certainly is, for such language in his days would, as I have observed above, have been impeachable. It has been also said, that William the Third's Ministers were in the habit of giving him advice which was personally disagreeable to him, particularly in what concerned the dismissal of his Dutch guards. As far as the *disagreeableness* of the advice goes, our late Ministers have certainly not fallen short of the laudable precedent established above a century ago. In other respects, they have far surpassed the merits of their ancestors. William the Third's Ministers might with impunity *advise* him to dismiss his Dutch guards; but had they threatened to bring a bill into Parliament, to *compel* him to dismiss his Dutch guards, would he not have *dismissed* them? Had the late Ministers only given their *advice*, they might have kept their places. William was indeed obliged to dismiss his Dutch guards, but it was in consequence of a resolution of the House of Commons, in which his Ministers took no part.

exalted rank; every way worthy of his dignity, as the constitutional king of a free country; and that he has afforded an additional proof, if any were wanting, of his sacred regard for his public duties, and of the watchful zeal and tenderness with which he has ever contemplated the general interests of his empire.

Much unnecessary trouble has nevertheless been taken, to prove what no one can deny, and much discussion has been introduced which is totally inapplicable to the subject. It has been asserted, that the conduct of the Ministers is to be justified, because they could not, consistently with their ministerial oath, consent to give that pledge which the King required from them, as the condition of their continuance in office. It has also been argued, that if the King insist on stipulations with his Ministers, by which they consent to fetter, or suppress their opinions, relative to particular points of domestic policy, or of the general administration of the laws, he transgresses the limits of his prerogative, and, by taking a responsibility on himself which the constitution does not acknowledge, he materially

weakens the safeguards of popular freedom. From this maxim, as a general principle, or as an abstract proposition, no one, who understands our government, can possibly dissent. It is a political axiom which admits of no doubt. But there are exceptions to all general rules, and cases may occur, for which the law has not provided, and in which the King may be justified in acting against the usual interpretation of those maxims, which custom has wisely established, and to which the legislature expects him to defer. Although the King, by his prerogative, can put his negative on any bill which has passed through the Houses of Parliament, yet the spirit of the constitution, in most instances, not only requires him to consult the other two branches of the legislature, but to obey their recommendations. And, indeed, it very seldom can happen, that there should, on this point, be difference of opinion, or opposition of interest. But still situations may be imagined to arise, in which it is necessary for the King, for the preservation of his own authority, to exercise his own judgment. The question before us does not, however, go to that length. Ministers had expressed *their*

opinion, but the Parliament had expressed *none*; and it surely can be interpreted into no improper interference on the part of the King, in a measure which was so peculiarly obnoxious to him, and in which he was so personally concerned, to prevent his Ministers, who, whilst in that capacity, are supposed to act in union with him, from proceeding further.* But how has his Majesty infringed on the rights of individuals, or the privileges of Parliament? He has not prevented Lord Grenville and Lord Howick, or any other members, from proposing whatever they may deem proper: he has only prevented them from bringing forward, as his Ministers, a measure which, in his conscience, he could never sanction.

But the objection to the pledge which the

* If the King could prevent a bill from being introduced into Parliament; or if, when introduced, he could arrest its progress, Parliament would certainly be a nonentity. If, on the other hand, the King had not the power of dismissing his ministers, but was under the necessity of allowing them, whenever they thought fit, to introduce and support in Parliament, in their official capacity, measures which trenched on his rights; or, in other words, if he were bound to lend the countenance of the crown, in support of measures which were injurious to the crown; and to employ the royal authority to defeat the royal wish, would not he be reduced to the same forlorn state?

King demanded is still unanswered; and yet it is easily invalidated. Because the late Ministers were justified in rejecting it, it by no means follows that his Majesty was *not* justified in requiring it. On the point at issue, he had fully and deliberately made up his mind. It was not a new question; it was one on which he had meditated for years; on which he had long since come to a determination from which he was firmly resolved never to swerve. Every act of his life had proved him the father of his people, and his benignant mind had induced him to extend, to all ranks and descriptions of his subjects, the blessings of a free constitution. Towards the Irish Roman Catholics he had shewn peculiar favour; and he had restored them to all those civil rights, which it had been the policy of former reigns to curtail. But it appeared to him that, whatever might be his inclination, his coronation oath directly militated against much further indulgence. This opinion, which he had early formed, had been fortified by habit and reflection; and to his scruples on this point, he had, some years ago, given up the strongest and most able administration, with which

this country was ever blessed. It was not then to be imagined, that his consent could be fairly obtained, when the motives for yielding were so much weakened. It was the conviction of this natural conclusion, which induced the late Ministers to have recourse to stratagem, and it was the timely discovery of this stratagem, in conjunction with the stipulations which they afterwards insisted on, which suggested to the King the necessity of a written pledge, that he might not again be exposed to a similar affront.

That the Ministers then acted right, in refusing to sign the pledge, I do not deny; but I also maintain, that the King, after what had passed, was justified in demanding it. The question had entirely originated with them; and they were the sole cause of the mischief which ensued. They had, without any provocation, brought themselves into the dilemma, and it was no more than just that they should pay the penalty of their rashness. The charge, therefore, which, without much observance either of temper or decorum, has been brought against the King, that he has, in this instance, made an improper and dangerous use of his preroga-

gative, is completely repelled; nor can I conceive the propriety, or utility, of having agitated in Parliament a question on which, in the abstract, all men are agreed. The King has been blamed; but, in my opinion, most wrongfully, and most unconstitutionally. He was compelled to exercise his judgment, and he has indisputably exercised it within the limits of his prerogative. Is he not, by the constitution of his country, invested with the power of appointing and dismissing, at pleasure, the confidential servants of the Crown? When they become his Ministers, they are, by oath, bound to consult with him, and to give him honest advice, on all measures which relate to the executive branch of the Government. Previously to the introduction of every new law, or to any alteration in the existing laws, it is their duty to advise with him; to ascertain his sentiments; and to be certain of his consent. They originate the measures in which the Crown is concerned; and whatever they introduce to the deliberation of Parliament, is supposed to have received the Royal approbation. As long as the King reposes confidence in the zeal, the talents,

and the integrity of his Ministers, he is naturally influenced, and, in a great degree, governed by their counsels. Points, however, may easily arise, in which there may be a difference of opinion between the King and his Ministers. If this difference cannot be accommodated to the satisfaction of the parties; if the King refuse to yield, and the Ministers cannot conscientiously alter their sentiments; an irreconcileable schism, from that moment, takes place, and it is their duty to resign. This is unquestionably the spirit of our laws. If they would bear any other interpretation, the government of the country could not possibly be carried on. If the King were, *à priori*, bound to submit to every measure suggested by his Ministers, it would depend on any set of factious men, who had forced themselves into office, to strip him entirely of his prerogatives. If both parties were bound to resist, and the King were deprived of the power of terminating this resistance by the dismissal of his Ministers; the King, his Ministers, and his Parliament, might be continually at variance, and a constant interposition of the Royal negative would be the consequence. There must,

then, be an understanding between them. In the present instance, that understanding has been interrupted by the hasty, misguided, illiberal, and improvident conduct of the late Ministry. They were, a few weeks ago, at the height of their ambition, at the height of that ambition which is most flattering to the pride of an elevated mind. They were a powerful administration, ruling an immense empire, at one of the most eventful and interesting crises that the world ever knew. They were furnished with the means of perpetuating their own fame, by extending and confirming the glory of their country, and by conferring endless blessings on the race of man. They were apparently so indissolubly linked together; they had so firmly cemented their strength; that the Opposition, which watched their measures, had resigned all hopes of supplanting them. Many of them were men of great and acknowledged talents; and from the circumstance of Lord Grenville being at their head, a nobleman of distinguished abilities, and who was additionally respected as the former friend and colleague of the illustrious Pitt, they possessed, to a considerable extent, the confi-

dence of the public. Although they had, since their accession to power, in some degree created disgust, by an arrogant assumption of superiority to other men; and although their acts had neither fulfilled their promises, nor justified their pretensions, still the nation approved of them, and suppressed the dissatisfaction at what had passed in the expectation of what was to come. We knew that they had talents, which it was their interest to exert; and we therefore had a right to suppose, that the sterility of the present, would be compensated by the abundance of a future, harvest. Under circumstances so gratifying to honest pride and to laudable ambition, what could induce them, thus unprofitably and unnecessarily, to encounter the risk, nay, the certainty, of dismissal? Their sudden dissolution was entirely a work of their own.* The effect of a change, at such a juncture, was, in many respects,

* The discreet and peaceable demeanour of the Irish Roman Catholics, since the agitation of this business, is a proof that the measure was *not of indispensable necessity*; and is a further proof that they join with the rest of his Majesty's subjects, in thinking that his Majesty has been most unworthily treated, and in condemning the arrogance of his late Ministers.

highly detrimental to the public service. If it had only been from the confusion in arrangements, and the loss of time, the inconvenience was serious; and under other circumstances, the country would not have deserted them. But in this instance a contest arose between the King and his Ministers: the King was right, and his Ministers were wrong: and in supporting the King, our reason, our duty, and our wishes, are fortunately coincident. Our late Ministers have, to use a vulgar proverb, as one of their witty associates observed, not only knocked their heads against a wall, but they have been at the trouble of building a wall, for that express purpose. Whatever therefore, the nation may suffer from the suspension of public business, the change of plans, or the dissolution of Parliament, they are the defaulters. It is all to be ascribed to their rashness. Their conduct, on this occasion, has, in fact, revealed a system of ungenerous intrigue, and of secret machination, which must nearly extinguish any regret we might otherwise feel for their removal. It is a kind of earnest how little the nation had, in reality, to ex-

pect; and how grievously their hopes would, in all probability, have been disappointed.*

Whilst Mr. Fox lived, much reliance was no doubt to be placed on the superiority of his understanding. Still the violence of his former political principles, and his strong inclinations to a revolutionary peace, detracted, unavoidably, from public confidence. When, on Mr. Fox's death, Lord Grenville became the effective leader, notwithstanding the sincere regret with which all ranks contemplated the disappearance of a luminary, which had blazed for so many years, which had attracted the admiration, and excited the astonishment of the civilized world, we felt our security increased. We were, at least, no longer fearful that the interests of the country would

* With how much more dignity would Lord Grenville and Lord Howick have acted, if, on withdrawing from office, they had followed Mr. Pitt's example in 1801; and if they had allowed people to form their own conjectures, without bringing the affair before Parliament, and pleading their cause against their Sovereign. Their request to the King to reveal the secrets of the Cabinet, which they, by oath, are bound *not* to reveal, is unprecedented; and the use which they made of the King's indulgence was as ungenerous as unconstitutional. One party being evidently wrong, their endeavour to justify themselves must have been at the King's expence.

be injured by an impolitic and premature desire of repose. We beheld, in Lord Grenville, an experienced and an enlightened statesman, a disciple of the old school, which had so long shewn a determined enmity to French innovations, and had so long maintained the dignity and honour of the empire. We knew that he had always, in this respect, thought as a Briton; and we hoped that the ascendancy of his genius would be able to controul and direct the interested views, and the subordinate talents of his associates. It is therefore doubly to be lamented, that any thing should have happened at this exigent moment, at this crisis of human affairs, to deprive the nation of his exertions, and to remove him from that eminent situation which he so well knows how to fill. The loss of Lord Grenville is, however, the only loss which the country has to regret. With this solitary exception, the different departments of the state are as ably, and, I trust, as *honestly* filled.* The other leading mem-

* Even with Lord Grenville's talents, to assist and direct them, little was done, during their administration of public affairs. As we have seen, there was no dispatch of business; no attention paid to the commercial interests of the country; our military and naval

bers of the late administration were not men peculiarly adapted to office. Most of Mr. Fox's old adherents had been tutored in a wrong school. They were skilful debaters, and useful to him in his system of attack. But they shared his faults, which were congenial to the inferiority of their minds, without partaking of his excellencies, which were derived from the transcendancy of his own. They were, like him, whilst in opposition, violent, and sometimes even factious, in their proceedings. They were, like him, spouters at the Whig Club, as well as debaters in Parliament. They were, like him, the advocates of all kinds of reform, and admirers of the French Revolution. But they were not, like him, in knowing how to resign former principles, how to abandon former errors: nor was the nation disposed to offer to them, the tribute which it voluntarily paid to the sublime genius of that extraordinary man.

One and all, however, on their accession

force was rendered useless or misapplied; and, as to their economy, it was little more than a pretence to persuade Parliament to create commissioners, that they might be better able to provide for their friends. I believe it is a fact, that not one of them was even present at an appeal cause, in the whole duration of their ministry.

to power, totally reversed their former opinions, and the nation was glad to pardon the inconsistency, by contemplating the usefulness, of their conduct. The oppression of the subject was no longer a watch-word; Parliamentary reform was altogether scouted; the plans of the illustrious Pitt were generally adopted; and the Duke of Norfolk, who had been re-instated at the Privy-Council, and was on the look-out for a blue ribbon,* no longer thought it became the dignity of the first peer of the realm, to propose from the chair at the Crown and Anchor dinners, as a patriotic toast, the *Majesty of the People*. Such was the atonement which

* The history of the loss, to the late administration, of the two vacant blue ribbons, is a very curious one When the first fell, the Duke of Norfolk and Earl Fitzwilliam both put in a claim for it. After some hesitation, the Duke of Norfolk consented to yield to Lord Fitzwilliam, as the representative of the Rockingham family. Lord Fitzwilliam was on the point of receiving it, when a third claim was put in by a very distinguished personage, for the Earl of Moira. To him Lord Fitzwilliam would have yielded, but the Duke would not. It was therefore agreed to wait. Another fell, but there were still three to satisfy, and it was difficult to settle who should be disappointed. It was therefore determined to wait for a third; but before a *third* fell, the administration was changed, and the two, of which they were already in possession, were lost.

they penitently made for past transgessions! Their ministerial conduct, however, had naturally awakened the susceptibility of their former partizans, and they were held up by that triumvirate of virtuous patriots and consummate politicians, Sir Francis Burdett, Mr. Cobbet, and Mr. Paull, as the vilest of apostates. They had, indeed, completely unmasked their real sentiments; and they were afforded an ample opportunity of announcing to the world, how ardently they coveted the possession of power, and how detrimentally they could apply its use. In what manner they may be received by old friends, now that their consequence is forfeited; now that they are reduced to their former level, and are compelled to mingle with the vulgar impotency of the multitude, must chiefly depend on themselves. Those, however, who herd together, merely from motives of ambition and party views, are easily pacified in their resentments. They make large allowances for the frailty of human nature. They view things through the palliating medium of christian charity; past offences are readily forgiven; and old attachments are easily revived. Thus they may again be as clamo-

rous on the popular side, as they were lately strenuous in an opposite direction. The stream may continue to run with the same violence, although in a contrary course. After however what has passed, the Whig Club can never again be looked up to, by any description of people, with respect. It had been converted, by the late ministers, into a ladder of ambition, which, the moment their object was obtained, was kicked with contempt from under them. It soon degenerated into an assembly of ranting ruffians, among whom these titled and official gentlemen were ashamed to be seen. There has indeed been throughout, even when it was in its zenith, a strange inconsistency in the leaders of this once formidable club; and, on what principles they, who declared that it was founded in order to strengthen and maintain inviolate, the principles of that glorious revolution, which placed William the Third on the throne, and secured the succession to a Protestant race of princes, could ever become the advocates of Catholic emancipation, remains to be explained.

I shall now very shortly release both the reader and myself. I have but few points

more to notice, and on these I shall be brief. It has been attempted by the late administration, to throw all the odium which attaches to the recent political revolution, and even the consequences of their own ministerial acts, on their successors in office. With what motive, it is easy to discern; but with what reason or justice, it is difficult to conceive. The responsibility of the measures which were concerted, and carried into effect, whilst they were in power, must certainly belong to them; and, as their removal was the unavoidable consequence of their own misconduct, they must also be answerable for whatever immediate mischief may arise out of it. The new ministers were unknown to the constitution till the seals of office were delivered into their custody; and the interval which elapsed between the dismissal of their predecessors and their appointment, the King was without advisers. It would be a monstrous proposition to assert, that they could be made accountable for the result of measures, in the framing of which they had no participation.

The late ministers have accused the present ministers of having, if not by a written

engagement, at least by a tacit admission, submitted to that pledge which they rejected. My answer to this accusation is: prove it. Why should it be necessary that such a pledge should be given or required. The leading men of the present government are known to entertain the same sentiments as the King, respecting the Catholic question. They have always deprecated its agitation, and opposed its progress. Why then cannot they as conscientiously enter upon the administration of public affairs as the late ministers assert they have quitted it. I am inclined to believe, that they would act more against their conscience, in bringing forward the Catholic claims, than their predecessors acted in obedience to their conscience, in refusing to abandon them. The late ministers have in fact proved, that they were not quite so scrupulous as they would have us imagine. If they thought that their duty absolutely enjoined the recommendation of certain additional privileges to the Catholics; if they conceived that the measure was of so pressing and indispensable a nature, that the delay of a single day was hazardous; how came they afterwards to compromise it, and finally,

to withdraw it altogether? The demand of the pledge was the only obstacle which they could not surmount. Here then was an evident dereliction of duty, an evident departure from the conscientious interpretation of their oath, according to their own explanation. If the reason for granting concessions to the extent stated, at this particular moment, were so very urgent, that, according to their notions, the tranquillity of Ireland, and, in some degree, the safety of the empire depended on them, why were they to be prevailed on to relinquish them at all? The reason is too evident to require a statement. As, therefore, his Majesty has been compelled, from the circumstances which have occurred, to change his late advisers, he is, in his exertions to form a new ministry answerable to the demand of the times, entitled to the zealous support of every friend to his country.

One word more and I have done. The late ministers finding, notwithstanding their dismission from office, that they are supported by a very formidable number of adherents, in a Parliament which they convened, and in which they contrived to introduce so many

steady friends, have, of course, strong objections to its dissolution. They think, that as long as the present Parliament exists, if their strength be not sufficient to force themselves back upon the King, it is sufficient to embarass and obstruct, and consequently to render less efficacious, the measures of their successors. They accordingly reprobate, in the severest terms, any such insinuation. They say, that after an appeal to the people so recently made, it will be little less than *diabolical*, to send the members back to their constituents. But why are they so fearful of this appeal? If they have justified themselves in the eyes of the nation; if the nation applaud their conduct in the late struggle, as they would have us believe; it would be a joyful tiding for them, as their ranks would be considerably increased. But, knowing that the very reverse is the case, they dread the consequences. And why should not the King, if he find it necessary for the support of his government, resort to this exertion of his prerogative? Were the late Ministers so very delicate in giving their advice on this subject? Or did they, out of tenderness to the interests of the country, or from a reluctance

to avoid the confusion of a general election, hesitate? So far from any such feeling, they selected a moment, at which the measure was quite unnecessary, and at which it must have been resolved on, merely for the sake of getting rid of a few opponents, and of introducing a few friends. In the old Parliament they had a decided majority, and the opposition, who were moderate and consistent in their attack, had neither chance nor hope of displacing them. Yet, when it was dissolved, did they not exert every authority and influence of office, to procure a new one still more obedient to their wishes? The counties of Hants, Norfolk and Northampton, and the City of Westminster, can particularly speak to the fact.

Are then the present Ministers, when the reasons for offering the same advice to their Sovereign are so much more cogent, to be fearful of giving it? Is the King to deliver up the reins of government, without first collecting the sense of the nation, to a set of men who have treated him so unbecomingly; who have so grossly abused his confidence; and who have rendered themselves so personally obnoxious? Is he to submit to that tyranny

which they endeavoured to acquire over him, without making an effort for deliverance, by resorting to the exercise of an undoubted prerogative? Nor will this fresh appeal to his people be ineffectually preferred, to a people who have, for so many years, experienced his paternal care; and who must be aware, how necessary it is, to the existence of the constitution, to support the rights of the Crown against the encroachments of ambitious Ministers. Had the late Ministers succeeded in their design to force the King to obedience, future resistance to increasing claims might have been useless, and whatever George the Third might have continued *de jure*, they would have held the supreme authority *de facto*. These being the hazards, it is not likely that the King's subjects will shew any inclination to countenance such an unconstitutional assumption of power; or that they will chuse representatives, who will be desirous of forcing back the late servants of the Crown. If a majority of such men be returned, it will at least be a declaration, that the many strong guards which our ancestors thought necessary for the defence of our rights, and the security of the Protestant suc-

cession, were uselessly placed, and that we ought now to remove them in favour of the Catholics. It will be a declaration of a wish to render the independence of the Crown submissive to ministerial influence and authority. It will also be a declaration, that we consider it for the benefit of the state, and congenial to the spirit of our laws, that the Ministers should be *every thing*, and the King *nothing*; that the King should be satisfied with the outward splendour and trappings of royalty; but that all the intrinsic power and patronage of the monarchy should be confided to half a dozen of his subjects. But no such feelings as these do, nor ever can, prevail. Our interests, our inclinations, and our duty, attach us to the just prerogatives of the Crown, in defending which, we must be convinced that we are supporting the purity of the constitution. It is not, therefore, to be imagined, that we shall desert our King, in favour of his late Ministers. This would not only be an act of the basest ingratitude, but it would be treasonable to our laws, and fatal to our liberties. Our love and attachment to our present monarch are indeed no fickle sentiment. They

are derived from the happy experience of near fifty years of a beneficent and patriotic reign, during which, he has not only been seated on the throne of his ancestors, but has dwelt in the affections of his people; and, whatever a few factious men may imagine, we shall never shew an inclination to transfer our allegiance to the house of Grenville, from the house of Brunswick.

POSTSCRIPT.

A FEW days after the foregoing pages were written, and on the very day of their publication, parliament was dissolved. Although this event happened some weeks sooner than it was expected, yet, it had been foreseen as inevitable, from the moment of those divisions in the House of Commons, which disclosed a determination on the part of a considerable portion of the members, to attach themselves to the cause of the late ministers, in opposition, not so much to the present ministers, as to the King himself. Thus situated, his Majesty had no alternative left, but to appeal to his people. This was the only mode by which he could ascertain, whether it was their wish that he should be supported in the just exercise of the prerogatives of his crown, or whether he should be completely stripped of all defensive power, and delivered over to the mercy of those who had so recently abused their trust. The question

involved another momentous consideration, on which the King also anxiously felt. This was the interpretation of a clause in his coronation-oath, for which he had ever entertained the deepest reverence, and concerning which, the scruples of his conscience were fortified by the decision of his judgment. He had carefully canvassed it in all its bearings, in a civil as well as a religious point of view, and it was the firm and deliberate conviction of his understanding, that to repeal the whole body of those disabling statutes, which our ancestors had deemed it wise to enact, against the aspiring designs of the Roman Catholic faith, would be no less detrimental to the interests of the state, than to those of the Established Church. The motive then by which the King was actuated, in refusing his assent to the measure which his late ministers proposed, was as powerful as any which can be supposed to influence or determine the operations of the human mind. And his Majesty will, I am convinced, have the satisfaction of finding, that his conduct, which, on this trying occasion, was regulated by the beneficent and honourable dictates of his own

heart, has the decided sanction and approbation of his people.

As far as my individual opinion goes, I might be inclined to enlarge many of the privileges of the Roman Catholics, and, were the times ripe for such a change, I might be inclined to enlarge them considerably. But experiments, which aim at an alteration in old established laws, should ever be gradually and cautiously made; and I would begin by adding to their political rights, before I intrusted them with military authority. I would see how they acquitted themselves as magistrates and senators, before I appointed them to the command of an army or a fleet. But to any great concessions at this moment, independently of the King's determination, there are other insurmountable objections. The spirit of the times to which, on such points, every discreet statesman will ever defer, is evidently against them. Much has been already done in the present reign, for the benefit of the Roman Catholics. They have been restored to all those privileges which most immediately affect their happiness, and to which they are naturally

most sensibly attached. Something more might, perhaps, be granted without exciting murmur, but not much more. The extension of the operation of the Irish act of 1793 to Great Britain, would, for the present, be as far as it would be prudent to go. Any material addition to this extension, would inevitably be the occasion of mischief. Of this there can be no doubt. So alive indeed are the protestants to the safety of their church, and so terrified at the bare idea of the ascendancy of a Popish hierarchy, that, I am persuaded if the King, during the late effort in favour of the Catholic claims, had yielded to the advice of his ministers, petitions would have flowed in from every corner of his dominions, beseeching him instantly to remove ministers, who had ventured to give such advice. Whether this feeling be just or reasonable is not worth debating; so long as it exists, it is necessary to consult it.

When the Catholic petition was discussed in Parliament two years ago, Mr. Pitt was thoroughly aware of this growing spirit of jealousy and alarm on the part of the Protestants; Mr. Fox perceived it also; and they both felt so entirely the necessity of submit-

ting to it, that I am convinced, if either of these illustrious men had lived, and continued in power, the late proposal would never have been brought forward. Mr. Pitt's and Mr. Fox's private opinion, as to the measure abstractedly, might have remained unchanged; but as their object was the general good of the empire, and as that object can only be attainable, in a measure of this nature, in proportion as it is coincident with the prevailing opinions and prejudices of mankind, they would, under adverse circumstances, have been more consistent in waving, than in promoting it. Had Lord Grenville and his colleagues imitated their prudent example, they might possibly have long continued to direct the political affairs of their country. The present ministers have been accused of industriously raising a fanatic alarm, to answer electioneering purposes, and of circulating as a watch-word, "the danger of the Church." These accusations are, however, without foundation. What mischief has arisen in this way, has been occasioned by the conduct of their predecessors. The Protestants require no additional stimulants to excite their sensibility; nor is it to be conceived that any

member of the government would, designedly, revive those frantic and disgraceful scenes with which religious feuds are uniformly attended. The late ministers are undoubtedly losing ground in all quarters; but this marked desertion of former friends, proceeds from causes very remote from the propagation of a watch-word.

The late ministers are unpopular on various accounts. In the first place, because they endeavoured, in an unfair manner, to intrench upon the royal prerogative; in the next place, because, when stratagem failed, they attempted to succeed by menace;* and, lastly, because these modes were adopted to insure the completion of a measure, which was equally odious to the King and to the people. This loss of public favour has been

* Much has been urged in extenuation, and many fruitless endeavours have been made, to soften down these serious charges into the mildness of misconception. But although positive evidence be wanting, the circumstantial evidence is clear and abundant. What, I would ask, would become of a prisoner at the Old Bailey, against whom such evidence could be produced? Would the jury conceive that much deliberation was requisite before they returned the verdict of guilty; or would the judge conceive the necessity of much hesitation before he pronounced the sentence of the law?

considerably augmented, since their dismission, by the intemperate language of their electioneering advertisements, which every one has read, and which it would be needless to criticise. That Lord Howick should have availed himself of such an opportunity of getting rid of a little superfluous spleen, would not have been matter of much surprise; but that he should have been so completely under the dominion of irritation, as to calumniate, in the most acrimonious strain, the government, and, by implication, the King and the nation at large, must be regretted by every one who respects either his public or his private character. But if regret is to be felt for any unbecoming act committed by Lord Howick, how greatly must that regret be increased, when we find Lord Grenville betraying the same violence of disposition. That this distinguished and enlightened statesman, for so many years the friend and associate of the immortal Pitt, should, for the gratification of a misplaced resentment, have descended from his elevated station, to contend for the prize adjudged to factious declamation, with the most furious demagogues of the day, is equally a subject of astonishment and of sorrow. It is indeed a circumstance

sincerely to be lamented, by every one who takes an interest in the fame of eminent political characters, to witness such a man as Lord Grenville, engaging on the same theatre, and employing the same weapons, as the democratical candidate of a tumultuous election, or the shameless editor of a seditious journal. Whether Lord Howick may repent his addresses to the freeholders of Northumberland is of little consequence, but Lord Grenville will, I am persuaded, long repent that unfortunate moment which decided on the publication of his letter to Dr. Gaskin. Had he reflected, his own reason would have readily supplied a refutation to every paragraph as he wrote it.*

* Both Lord Grenville and Lord Howick have very weakly contended, that the act of 1804, enabling a certain number of foreign troops and officers of whatever religious persuasion they might be, to serve in this country, which was introduced by Mr. Pitt, as more than a justificatory precedent in support of the policy and expediency of granting those additional privileges, which they were desirous of conferring on the Irish Roman Catholics. But they seem to have totally forgotten that Mr. Pitt's measure was temporary; whereas their own was to be permanent. This makes all the difference. If the country had experienced any inconvenience from these foreign troops, they might have been instantly dismissed. But this precaution could not be resorted to with the Irish Roman Catholics, nor would it be a very pleasant experi-

What has also contributed considerably to increase the unpopularity of the late ministers, is the successive developement of their public acts, by which a direful proof has been afforded both of incapacity and of neglect. The chief object of a statesman, in the concerns of war, must be properly to apply the national resources, which can only be effected by a just correspondence between ends and means. It is an easy business to trace out a splendid speculation: it requires a sound judgment to insure a prosperous conclusion. The late ministers have succeeded in the easy part; but, in the difficult part, they have been wofully defective. They either had too many plans in view, or, neglecting duly to apportion the means of execution, failure has been the natural consequence. We have already seen, that it was a fortunate accident, which placed Monte Video in our possession, and that if the Spanish garrison had prolonged a *nine day's* resistance to *eleven days*, our gallant countrymen would, from a want of powder,

ment, after having passed a law, throwing open to them the whole range of command, to rescind the privilege, and re-place them under their former disabilities.

have been compelled to resign all hope of success.

The expedition against Constantinople, not being thus fortuitously assisted, has, from an extraordinary combination of ignorance and weakness, totally miscarried. Our government committed every blunder which it was possible to make. They were neither in possession of the previous information which was essential to success, nor did they employ a force in any way adequate to the object of acquisition. They must nevertheless have known, before they gave their orders, that the Turks have castles for the protection of the Dardanelles; and that the opposite shores, in some places, approach each other, within three quarters of a mile. They must moreover have known, that the current, which is incessantly flowing through the Bosphorus into the Sea of Marmora, and through the Dardanelles into the Mediterranean, renders the navigation of this celebrated strait peculiarly difficult, and that it is only to be stemmed by a strong leading wind. How then they could imagine that, under such circumstances, Constantinople,

What has also contribut[illegible] ng also by increase the unpopularit[illegible] force, and ters, is the successive [illegible] subdued by public acts, by which [illegible] gates, with- afforded both of ir[illegible] vours of a de- The chief object [illegible] shness such as is cerns of war, ir[illegible] It has been asserted, national resou[illegible] at their orders were most by a just co[illegible] this, instead of excusing, is means. I[illegible] gravation of their misconduct. splendid [illegible] mmander would have been justified judgm[illegible] eying such orders with such means? The [illegible] very attempt, if persevered in, must pa[illegible] terminated in destruction. The wind, however, most fortunately impeded the progress of our ships, and Admiral Duckworth was obliged to anchor at the distance of eight miles from the Turkish capital. He remained there for ten days, during which time, such had been the activity of the Turks, and the range of batteries had become so formidable, that when he again found himself without the Dardanelles, he could not help expressing his congratulations on the safety of his fleet. Had he continued a few days longer in the Sea of Marmora, his escape would have been

natical.* On this trying service,
niral displayed that conduct
looked for from his former
tructions required the
ossibilities, in which he
, but, short of that, he did
n his naval capacity, which va-
udgment could accomplish.† But

* Admiral Duckworth says, in his dispatch to Lord Collingwood, dated March 6th, without the Dardanelles, "I know it was my duty, in obedience to your Lordship's orders, to attempt every thing (governed by the opinion of the ambassador) that appeared within the compass of possibility, but when the unavoidable sacrifice of the squadron committed to my charge (which must have arisen had I waited for a wind to enable me to cannonade the town, unattended with the remotest chance of obtaining any advantage for his Majesty's service) must have been the consequence of pursuing that object, it at once became my positive duty, however wounded in pride and ambition, to relinquish it." And a little lower down he says, "We weighed in the morning (the 3d of March), and when I add that every ship was in safety outside of the passage about noon, it is not without the most lively sense of the good fortune that has attended us." And, in the next paragraph, he adds, "had they (the Turks) been allowed another week to complete their defences throughout the channel, it would have been a very doubtful point whether a return lay open to us at all."—*See Gazette dated Admiralty Office, May* 4, 1807.

† For the sake of Admiral Duckworth as a diplomatist, but more especially for the sake of Mr. Arbuthnot, I must hope, that the correspondence, which has appeared in the Paris papers, and which the French assert, took place between the English and the Turks,

what other result could have been rationally expected, from a project so miserably planned, except that which has actually taken place, which has been, to lower the high estimation in which the British navy has hitherto been holden; to confirm the ascendancy of the French interest at the Porte; ,to excite the hatred of the Turks towards the English; and completely to annihilate all commercial connexion between this country and the Ottoman empire.*

The expedition against Egypt remains to be noticed. In our survey of this affair, a strong objection immediately presents itself.

during the ten days our squadron was at anchor, has been materially mutilated.

* The late ministry had certainly a remarkable knack at getting rid of treaties. I have already noticed their having allowed our treaty with Russia to expire. On January 6, 1799, a treaty, between Great Britain and Turkey, very advantageous to this country, was signed by Mr. Spencer Smith and his brother Sir Sidney, to continue in force for eight years, which has been suffered to experience the same fate. Sebastiani had been long anxiously waiting for the arrival of this inauspicious moment, and, when it came, he knew how to take advantage of it. In consequence of our late proceedings before Constantinople, the Barbary powers, who were such an annoyance to the coasting trade of the French and their dependents, particularly the Neapolitans and the Genoese, have commenced hostilities against us.

Having sent a fleet to Constantinople, with instructions to negotiate, and to abstain from any hostile act, until our efforts to preserve peace had proved fruitless, the invasion of a Turkish province, whilst these conferences were pending, was a flagrant violation of good faith, such as has not very frequently been allowed to stain our national honour. As a mere act of war, had the act been legitimate, and as a branch of an extensive plan, provided it can be retained, it may certainly prove a useful acquisition, and may lead to beneficial effects. In a commercial view, it opens considerable resources, and being a country on which the Turks place a high value, and from which they draw many articles of indispensable consumption, in the event of a reconciliation, it may be instrumental in procuring us more desirable terms than we might otherwise obtain. But this expedition partakes of the same errors which have characterised every other branch of foreign service, during the government of the late ministers. The invading force has been insufficient, and, should the faithless disposition of the Beys and of the inhabitants sti-

mulate them to revolt, our troops must be exposed to the risk of speedy expulsion.

With so many strong reasons for dissatisfaction, it is not surprising that dissatisfaction should have been expressed, and that, during the general election, at most places where the late ministers or their declared partisans, have been candidates on popular grounds, they should have been defeated. Thus Lord Howick has been thrown out for Northumberland, Lord Henry Petty for the University of Cambridge, Mr. Sheridan for Westminster, and Lord William Russel for Surry; Mr. Windham has declined standing for Norfolk, and Mr. Tierney for Southwark:* and if Lord Grenville, Lord Lauderdale, and several others were not the possessors of hereditary seats in the House of Lords they would, in all probability, like the rest of their late colleagues, be the degraded representatives of *rotten* boroughs. Independently of such signal defeats among principals, the interests of these gentlemen have been most triumphantly overthrown in nu-

* To these may be added, the defeat of Lord Fitzwilliam's interest at Malton, of Lord Spencer's at St. Albans, and of Lord Caernarvon's in Hampshire.

merous quarters, and there are many other places, which have hitherto been considered as perfectly secure from attack, where, if opposing candidates had started, they would have been gladly returned.

These are distinct and incontrovertible declarations of public opinion, and it must be highly gratifying to the feelings of our good and venerable monarch, to find, that he is so generally supported by the suffrages of his people, and that his appeal to their affections and to their reason has not been fruitlessly made.

London, June 6th, 1807.

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THE

CRISIS.

THE Continent having been subdued, less however by the arms of its oppressor than by the folly and corruption of its governments, and the pusillanimity or indifference of its people, it becomes a question of the highest moment to the welfare and safety of this empire, speedily to determine on the mode of policy which it is expedient to adopt, in consequence of this melancholy alteration in human affairs.

The causes of those complicated and unparalleled misfortunes which have befallen most of the European states, and have placed them entirely at the disposal of a vindictive and merciless despot, are sufficiently apparent. They may be plainly traced in their own acts; in the irrational

jealousies by which they have been domineered, and the unmanly fears by which they have been appalled.

Buonaparte's uninterrupted success throughout his marvellous career, has induced him, on all occasions, to confide in its stability, and has seemed to justify in him a departure from those prudential maxims, which in other men would have been deemed a desperation approaching to insanity. After the disastrous issue of the campaign in 1805; after the dreadful examples which had in all quarters been exhibited; it was not to be conceived that human nature could be so besotted, so sunk in lethargic slumber, so regardless of the ease and comfort and dignity of social independence, as to shrink from combining in one great and magnanimous effort, to rescue whatever is honorable or desirable in life from the misery and disgrace of a foreign yoke.

Buonaparte's easy conquest, in the following year, of the military (does it deserve that name?) strength of Prussia; the rapidity

of its total dispersion, added to the eagerness with which all the strong posts and fortresses of that once potent and warlike monarchy were betrayed into his possession, so elated his hopes, and bewildered his judgment, that he spurned every consideration on which the retention of conquest, or even the insurance of his political existence seemed to depend. By his victory at Auerstadt and his subsequent triumphal entry into the Prussian metropolis, he had, one should have thought, accomplished enough to satisfy the feelings both of pride and revenge over a humiliated and impotent foe. The king of Prussia was completely disarmed, and would gladly have submitted to any terms short of total annihilation, which the conqueror chose to dictate.

But this did not correspond with the amplitude of Buonaparte's projects. The king of Prussia had still provinces to flee to; the Saxons were willing to separate themselves from the confederacy; the Russians had provoked his anger; and the Poles were again to be revolutionised, in order to make a provision for some branch

of his upstart family. These were the powerful motives, which, in defiance of all caution, stimulated him still to advance, and once more to risk the probability of being utterly undone.

Mankind is so apt to reason from results, to be dazzled by the glare of prosperity, and to call that wise which turns out to be successful, that it is scarcely possible to prevail on them to contemplate, with any portion of sober reflection, events such as have lately arisen. It must nevertheless be observed, and indeed at the time it was universally admitted, that Buonaparte's presumptuous imprudence implicated him, for several months, in a position which was full of difficulty and hazard. He was in a most embarrassing and precarious dilemma. From his domestic resources he was separated near a thousand miles; he was surrounded by states, which had been delivered up to the devastations of his troops, and which, had he sustained any signal reverse, would instantly have been in arms against him; and he was opposed by an army which,

although inferior in numerical force, impelled by gallantry and directed by skill, maintained an equal conflict, and held him completely in check. His battalions which, for the last few years, had always been accustomed to advance, and in advancing, easily to surmount every obstacle as it presented itself, must have been mortified and dispirited at an interruption, which was not of an evanescent nature, to be removed by a temporary additional exertion, but which, during a long and active campaign, resisted the utmost efforts of the bravery of his troops and the tactics of his generals.

It does awaken most melancholy feelings, feelings verging towards despair, when we reflect what, at such a momentous period, an auxiliary force might have accomplished, and what, from the want of such an aid, has been irrecoverably lost. The Corsican chief, who, with his ruffian but organised hordes, had been for so many years the terror and the scourge of the fairest portions of the civilized world; the ravages of whose destructive sword had

been felt in every branch of human industry, and in every recess of human enjoyment; who had subverted every civil institution, and dissolved every social tie; who had despised the prejudices, and trampled on the rights of mankind; who had dethroned kings, and exterminated people; who had mutilated the beauty and shaken even the constitution of nature; this man, the curse and execration of his species, was, not merely for a day, not merely for a week, but for several months, so situated, that had there been a particle of vigour or generosity, or even of prudence or precaution, left in the Austrian councils, as far at least as moral reasoning can warrant an inference, might have been overthrown.

If the Russians and Prussians were of themselves sufficient to arrest Buonaparte's progress, and even to contend with him for victory in the field; if, in their numerous contests, each party claimed with equal pretension the ascendancy; if Buonaparte, instead of fulfilling his gasconading promises, was reduced to the miserable expe-

dient of subterfuge and falsehood, in order to suppress the truth of events, and to keep down the spirit of insurrection, which was every day threatening to break out in the north of Germany; it is very evident, that the accession of the military strength of Austria to that of the allied army, would have insured his total discomfiture. Unfortunately, however, Austria bore a more rooted antipathy to Prussia than to France; and, in obedience to this malignant passion, generated in distant times, but which actual circumstances might have moderated, she secretly rejoiced at the total abasement with which her rival was menaced. The subjugation of Prussia was an event so palatable to her feelings, that she preferred incurring, in her turn, the risk of a similar fate, to any interposition, which, by the reinstatement of the House of Brandenburg, would not only have secured her own future independence, but might have recovered for her whatever has been severed from her empire, in all the disastrous wars which she has waged in the course of the last fifty years. Reduced and humbled as Prussia was, and suing on all sides for

aid, Austria might have negotiated on her own terms. She might, by the expulsion of Buonaparte from the old German empire, have restored, in its full splendour, the Germanic constitution, and for ever have consolidated her ascendancy and her fame.

But whilst Austria merits such bitter censure, I cannot help, at the same time, severely condemning the inexplicable remissness of our own Government. After what had happened in the course of the last two years, our reliance on the cordial co-operation of Austria could not have been very strong. That generous spirit which is kindled and cherished by the love of country, the thirst of glory, and the pride of independence, had, almost throughout the continent, completely evaporated. That holy fervour, which, in happier times, had impelled men cheerfully to endure every calamity rather than submit to the reproach of cowardice, had lost its inspiring influence; and they were either sunk in an indolence which rendered exertion the most intolerable of all evils,

or overwhelmed by a stupor which totally eclipsed both the mental and corporeal sight. Man was no longer what he had been, a being endowed with a quick apprehension of his interests, attached to his rights, resentful of injury, devoted to the government under which he lived, and to the community of which he was a member, and prepared to encounter every peril, and yield to every sacrifice, for the glory of his country, the defence of his property, or the protection of his family. All these fine sentiments were extinguished, and he had become a sort of brute inanimate lump of matter, alike incapable of receiving or communicating any useful or honourable impression. But even if human nature had not degenerated into this morbid state of degradation, and there had been some fair reason to hope that Austria would pursue that conduct which her interests so plainly prescribed, yet surely we ourselves were sufficiently concerned in the issue of the contest, to be induced to employ our own powerful means, and not to leave to accident what to a certainty we could secure.

For several years past, but more particularly since Buonaparte's unqualified usurpation, we have conducted the war on principles most palpably erroneous; and that force which, concentrated, might have been efficiently employed, has been either frittered away in the inanity of colonial expeditions, or has been cooped up in places, which, from their position, have deprived it of all possibility of active operation. But if this obvious mistake has been long persisted in, at no period was it pushed to such an extent, nor has it been productive of such mischievous consequences, as during the rule of the late administration. If ever there was a moment pregnant with important events; if ever there was a crisis on which the destiny of empires balanced, it occurred whilst they were entrusted with the direction of public affairs. Instead, however, of giving proofs of that enlightened judgment which can alone wisely plan, or vigorously execute, the whole of their time, which was not engaged in occupations that personally concerned them, was consumed in arrangements of domestic policy, which, without

inconvenience, might have been deferred, or in preparing and dispatching armaments which it would have been infinitely more judicious to have altogether omitted. Of what consequence was it, whether we possessed a fortress or a few miles of domain on the coast of South America; or whether we occupied Egypt with five thousand men; or whether we bombarded Constantinople with seven sail of the line? Our grand enemy was Buonaparte: our grand object was to rescue the continent from the grasp of his domination. Had we kept our troops collected in some convenient position at home, with an ample provision of transports ready to receive them at the moment their services were wanted, so as to have enabled us, a few weeks before or even after the battle of Eylau, to land forty or fifty thousand men in the rear of the allied armies, is there a military character in Europe, who will estimate at so low a rate the value of such a detachment of British soldiers, as to maintain that Buonaparte would not have been exposed to the risk of total destruction? This body of men occupying the left wing of the French army,

and being more than its match, would have enabled General Bennigsen, by contracting his line, to strengthen his centre and his left wing, and, by such a movement, to out-flank the centre and right-wing of his antagonist. Thus assisted, Dantzick would have been speedily relieved; and Buonaparte, once overpowered in the field, harassed and pressed on every side, would, in his retreat, have been assailed by such a host of additional foes, that had he effected his personal safety, which would have been very doubtful, he would have been so reduced in strength, and so blemished in reputation, that he never again could have become a formidable foe. Nor would the destruction of his army, had it been accomplished, have been the greatest benefit which Europe would have derived from such an event. What would have been of far greater consequence, that magic spell, which has, for so great a length of time, obscured and enchained all the faculties of human action, would have been at once dissolved, and human affairs, after such tedious and distant deviations from their regular course, would have reverted

to their former channels. All the false splendour which encircles Buonaparte's character would have instantly vanished, and he would have appeared in his native baseness, as abject in adversity, as in prosperity he has been haughty, cruel, and unjust. The satellites who have revolved with him in his rapid and destructive orbit, would with their primary planet have disappeared, and those who are now occupying thrones and principalities would have returned to the humble avocations, for which they are by birth and education and manners best fitted.

Had Buonaparte used his fortune with any degree of moderation, he might have been entitled, if not to the applause, at least to the gratitude of mankind. Had he made an *honest* use of it, and been as sedulous to restore, as he has been zealous to destroy, his memory would have been embalmed in the everlasting gratitude and veneration of his species. His friends exclaim, But why abuse him? Why call him by degrading names? Why not allow him at least that merit which no one in justice

can deny him? Nor am I at all inclined to refuse him what I conceive to be his due. I may differ with others about the measure, which, in many respects, must ever remain matter of judgment and opinion. Nor do I pretend to scrutinize into the hidden recesses of the human heart. I know that we cannot analize it like a mineral production; that we cannot assay it as we can a piece of gold; that we cannot accurately separate the dross from the finer particles, or estimate its value in carats and grains. Still there are visible moral effects by which its intrinsic worth may be calculated, and by these I judge. Am I then to be told that I injure the cause of virtue, when I designate vice by those epithets which best express its deformity? Am I to be told that I injure the cause of my country, by making my countrymen familiar with the character of its bitterest foe, and by holding up to their just abhorrence and indignation, a being who has added more to the sum of human affliction, than any other scourge that ever infested the earth? Is it only low wickedness, regulated by vulgar contrivances, and

limited to the casual destruction of a few obscure individuals, that is to be exposed to public execration; and is the mighty destroyer of nations and laws, of commerce and arts, of justice and religion, to retain his usurpation, and to pursue his profligate career, impervious to reproach? I may lament, I may dread, but am I bound to respect, that power which has been founded in violence and fraud, and which can only be preserved by the terrors and the havoc of military despotism? Am I bound to esteem, or venerate, or love, the members of an obscure and rapacious family merely because they have been sharers in the spoils of one great delinquent, who has invested them with the rights and property of others, and who, instead of denominating them by their legal names, and confining them to their proper stations, has decorated them with the noblest titles, and raised them to the most elevated offices? Am I bound to respect a court, where the sovereign is a usurper of mean extraction and profligate morals, and who is surrounded by courtiers as vulgar and as infamous as himself; where honour and virtue are equally scandalized,

and where a system of morals is exhibited, from which all decency or elegance or refinement is totally excluded; where there is nothing for honesty to approve, or for gentility to imitate; where the women have formerly followed the professions of milliners, players, opera-dancers, bawds and strumpets; and where the men have figured away in the equally respectable characters of shopmen, fiddlers, hair-dressers, low clerks, gamesters, and common swindlers? Am I to respect such things, because they have shouldered their superiors from their places, and, tricking themselves out in the frippery which many of them once sold, they impudently ape the manners of the antient and dignified classes of society? No! As long as I retain the birth-right of a Briton, and when that is gone I care little what else follows, never will I so scandalously prostitute my pen, or pervert and confound the terms of language. In this country we have still a free press, and wretched indeed would be the lot of mankind, if the arm of power could universally stifle the voice of truth, and if vice could always

extort from subdued humanity the panegyric to which virtue alone has a claim. I judge Buonaparte by the fairest of all criteria, the general tenor of his acts: I appreciate his merit by the inherent qualities which he displays: and as long as I am blessed with the faculty of speech, thinking as I do, that he is deserving of the bitterest execrations, I will never associate any thing honourable, or virtuous, or truly great, with his name.

It is a dreadful visitation on the corruptions of mankind, that a being so endowed, with passions and propensities which are everlastingly propelling him to the commission of acts destructive of all the most valuable blessings of life, should be in possession of a measure and description of power, that enables him to carry his baneful resolves into such extensive execution. And the consideration of this power is rendered doubly mortifying and afflicting, when we reflect how easily and how effectually it might, at one period, have been resisted.

At the close of the late negotiations with France, which were conducted with so much affected courtesy and moderation, but with so little real skill, and which were even protracted long after the result was obvious to the dullest capacity, there was yet time to repair the mischief which had been so studiously disregarded, or so culpably sought. When Buonaparte quitted Paris to take the command of his armies against Prussia, secret intelligence, in which we have ever been so miserably deficient, was no longer of use. The determination which he had long privily made, was now publicly proclaimed; and it surely required no great depth of penetration to discover the progression of his plans. Was not this then the moment to combine our preparations, to organize our schemes, to collect our resources, and to be ready, with a powerful and commanding force, effectually to assist those, who, by becoming his enemies, were sure to become our allies? The only foe we had to dread was Buonaparte. Against him our whole strength ought consequently to have been directed. If we overcame him, every col-

lateral object was gained: if he prevailed, any advantages that we might gain in other quarters, could be of little avail. To what end then, on what principles of sound judgment or prudent policy, could we so inconsiderately engage in distant enterprizes from which, if we succeeded, we could derive no benefit equivalent to the expence, and which moreover, by seriously diminishing our strength at home, disabled us from effecting the attainment of all our hopes and speculations, which was the destruction of Buonaparte's continental authority? The fate of our expeditions to Egypt and Constantinople has been such as, from the preparations, was to be expected. By the former, many brave men have been uselessly sacrificed in occupying a district, which they, eventually, will be compelled to abandon: by the latter, the commercial world has been exposed to the loss of a lucrative branch of trade, and the country has been involved in a war with an old and faithful ally. Our expedition to South America, which was on a greater scale, has been pregnant with proportionably greater folly, and has had a propor-

tionably disastrous termination. Independently of the disgrace of failure, it has been attended with very extensive inconvenience and loss. The bravery of our soldiers was never more conspicuous, and, on that account, their slaughter is doubly to be deplored. Yet however creditable this expedition may have been to our national courage, it has certainly, in the estimation of mankind, plucked many a leaf from the wreath of our military skill. But it partook, in its origin, of those palpable defects with which every scheme concerted by the late administration so surprisingly abounded, and nothing but what has happened could have been calculated on by any well-informed and reflecting mind.

A free trade with the extensive continent of South America, was certainly an object of considerable political utility; and if, instead of aiming at conquest for ourselves, we had assisted in the emancipation of the oppressed inhabitants of those fertile regions from the Spanish yoke, the force required for the purpose would have been trifling, and the object would have

been permanently secured. But engaging in this expedition, in the view of extending our empire, the motive became a selfish one, and a determined resistance, on the part of the Spaniards, was instantly created. The affair presented itself to their optics in its natural point of view, and they only perceived in our success a change of masters, who, in addition to that rigorous exercise of empire which conquest implies, were surveyed with augmented jealousy and dread on the score of religious prejudices. Heretics would have been gladly received as deliverers; but as invaders, they were indignantly abhorred; and those advantages which, by a generous policy, we might have obtained, by our foolish ambition we have forfeited.

A blunder, still more ruinous in its consequences, was committed by the assemblage of a numerous army in Sicily, of whose services, from its position, we were totally deprived. That kind of infatuation which could have induced the late ministry, to immure in such a corner so powerful a force, it is impossible to ac-

count for. A measure, so replete with absurdity, betrays a degree of obstinacy or of ignorance, which in statesmen is altogether inexcusable, and has been the cause of disasters to this country, most mournful in their nature, and in their consequences irreparable. The moment is now passed at which Buonaparte might have been successfully attacked, nay at which he might, to a moral certainty, have been vanquished, nor is it likely speedily to recur. Their total misapplication of the resources of the empire, has, therefore, been accompanied with no trifling or ordinary mischief. It has diverged in every direction: it has been felt in every combination: it has injured the essential interests of the civilized globe: and it has inflicted a wound on the glory and prosperity of Great Britain, which all the skill of science or art may be incompetent to heal.

Having thus failed through the incapacity and mismanagement of our late leaders, both in policy and duty, our chief business now is to consider on the means left

to extricate ourselves (if it be still feasible) from those augmented difficulties and dangers in which we have been involved.

On all occasions of moment, success greatly depends on decisive and vigorous conduct. Under particular circumstances, celerity of action frequently accomplishes more than wisdom of deliberation. Promptitude of attack displays such an undoubted proof of energy of character, that it creates for itself advantages which, whilst they surmount difficulty, diminish danger. What the French have gained in the field, has been chiefly from the quickness of their movements. In every enterprize, they have been beforehand with their opponents. Even the desperation with which they have embarked, has often been the instrument of triumph. Sunk in indolence, indifferent to consequences, terrified by imaginary fears, no firmness nor constancy, nor activity of spirit, has been anywhere manifested, capable of repelling their bold assaults; and the mere audaciousness of their demands has, in many instances, extorted compliance. Not that I am wish-

ful of recommending the conduct of France as a pattern altogether fit for the adoption of our government. But such is the present melancholy aspect of affairs, that, to a certain extent, it must be so contemplated, and indeed is the only apparent mode within our reach, by which our safety can be secured.

Much as I feel inclined to venerate the ancient public law of Europe;—that law which, for a long series of ages, by preserving a political balance, upheld the independence of the various states into which it was divided, and, with their preservation, contributed to the advancement of every elegant refinement, or useful occupation; ardently as I wish that that law, and the innumerable benefits which it conferred, were still in force; yet when I perceive one man, whose power or influence, this flourishing and happy land excepted, extends to every circle of civilized life, and almost to every privilege of animated nature; when I perceive this man, thus gifted, completely breaking up the old system, by which nations, in their conduct towards each other, have been hitherto regulated;

when I observe him totally disregarding the faith of treaties, the authority of local habits, and the enthusiasm of national prejudices; setting every ordinance, both human and divine, completely at defiance; and promulgating decrees which are universally to operate, according to the capricious inclinations of his base and irritable passions; when things are carried to this extreme pitch, we are compelled, in our own defence, to consider how we can best avert the mischief which he has inflicted on others, and which he is meditating to extend to us. If we cannot preserve ourselves by adhering to those prescriptive rules which, from being deserted by others, no longer protect us, we surely are released from all obligation to obey them; and it depends entirely on our discretion to adopt that new mode which new circumstances require. If others suffer from this change in our conduct, we are not to blame—that is their misfortune, not our crime; and the whole mischief is to be imputed to him who forces us into this unavoidable state.

In conformity to this reasoning, we are not only justifiable in having recourse to those regulations which are best qualified to defeat and confine his; but we are guilty of an evident dereliction of a most sacred duty, by postponing the determination so to act. Every society is indispensably bound to watch over its perpetuation. When that leading object of its solicitude can be effected by the maintenance of mild laws, and the observance of ancient usages, a departure from them is a wicked, and may become a dangerous experiment. But when, by an adherence to them, its existence, from the previous desertion of others, is endangered, it is not only weak but criminal, to persevere in obedience. Self-preservation supersedes every other obligation, and to the safety of the commonwealth inferior considerations must yield.

Buonaparte having therefore, in every particular, totally annulled the public law of Europe, and, in his principles and his acts, far outstripped every occasional excess, which has ever been committed by those in whose hands the power of empire

has before resided, we must resort to the solitary alternative which his injustice has left us, and endeavour to oppose the profligacy and outrages of his designs by the sternness of retaliation. Thus, he having declared this country in a state of blockade, and, by the most nefarious edicts, compelled every port, over which his authority extends, to be shut against our manufactures, we should instantly resolve to cut off his means of supply, as well as those of his dependents and friends, by excluding all possibility of commercial dealings from their havens. We should convert our navy to the same use which he makes of his army; and, by putting a complete hinderance to neutral intervention, convince him that our power could be more detrimentally employed than his. Affairs have at length reached that aggravating and outrageous point of enmity, that it is worse than folly to be any longer restrained in our proceedings by the delicacy of sentiment, or the forms of ceremony. Buonaparte has in the plainest terms declared, and he has acted up to the declaration, that every nation which he

can coerce by force, or terrify by threats, or persuade by argument, shall be hostile to Great Britain, and shall, in concert with him, contribute its aid to augment our embarrassments, and accelerate our political extinction. This being the case, we should be guided in our actions towards him according to the conduct which he observes towards us; and as long as he perseveres in the enforcement of his pernicious doctrines, we should retaliate by similar acts, till we have impressed him with proper notions of the folly of the experiment on his part.

Whilst we continue to persevere in our present system of meekness and moderation, by confining ourselves to the obsolete public law of Europe, we evidently disarm ourselves of half our power; and Buonaparte, who is restrained by no such squeamish disposition, derives signal and innumerable advantages from the severity of his commercial regulations. But should we interpose with our preponderating means, and retaliate on him and his friends by the same rigorous inhibitions, he would speedily discover that the chief suffering re-

coiled on himself. Such is the singular and afflicting position of Europe at this moment, that, strictly speaking, there are but two independent states. From the continent which he has subjugated, Buonaparte has banished all neutrality. The only neutrality remaining among the nations of the globe is a maritime one, which of course exists by sufferance from us. From this sufferance France derives all the benefit, and we incur all the mischief. On what principles of policy or justice we are bound to tolerate such an unequal state of things, it is needless to attempt to explain.

The distresses and inconveniences to which our commerce is subjected, in consequence of our tame acquiescence in Buonaparte's tyrannic ordinances, are sufficiently evident. They are every day accumulating in number and weight, and, unless speedily redressed, may be productive of the most ruinous effects. The exportation to the continent being nearly at an end, our trade, in all its branches, has sustained an alarming shock. It is in vain to endeavour to conceal the consequences

of Buonaparte's prohibitory laws. He may suffer from them himself, but with that we have nothing to do: we suffer with him, and to an infinitely greater extent. Our offices of customs and excise, which used to display such busy scenes, indicative both of our industry and our wealth, are now deserted places, where nobody is in attendance but the clerks, who, for want of better employment, are renewing the sports and pastimes of their boyish days. The docks and wharfs, which were formerly crowded with ships loading and unloading their valuable cargoes, and the streets on the water-side, which were perpetually thronged with carts conveying the richest commodities from one repository to another, now exhibit a silent and lifeless scene. These are serious evils, and, unless soon remedied, must be the cause of a defalcation in the revenue which will not be easily repaired. West and East India produce, those two leading branches of our commerce, have also, for want of a foreign market, become nearly a dead stock. Beyond our domestic consumption they are totally unsaleable, and, from the immense

stores on hand, are so lowered in price, that they yield scarcely sufficient to clear the duties, and the expences of freight, commission, and other charges to which they are liable. The planter and the merchant must consequently be deprived, not only of all profit, but of the means of defraying those disbursements which they must unavoidably incur; and as no people can be induced to labour long without reward, unless something be done to relieve them from this insupportable pressure, their occupations will be discontinued, and the revenue, with other innumerable advantages derived from the intricacy and variety of their extensive concerns, will be withdrawn from the fund of our national resources.

From the gradual progress of society, the productions of the Eastern and Western hemispheres have become articles of general consumption, and the inhabitants of the European countries have been so familiarised with their use, that they are as indispensable to their comforts and their wants as those of indigenous growth. Un-

less then, there be a physical impossibility of procuring them, they will never submit to their deprivation. But it is the spirit of commerce, to find out the cheapest method of stocking the different markets with these articles of general consumption and demand. As long, therefore, as neutral vessels are permitted to cover the seas, and to maintain nearly a direct correspondence between the European states and the distant regions of the globe, it stands to reason, that they will be resorted to by those belligerents, who have no naval force for the protection of their own shipping, as the medium through which they transact their foreign concerns. When the usual mode is interrupted, the next best is resorted to, and so on. Those whose life is spent in calculation, easily detect an error, and rectify it by a fresh expedient. Few obstacles can paralyse their activity, or outwit their acuteness.

According to these principles, the foreign merchant, who is a member of a belligerent state, as long as he can ascertain that neutral vessels will furnish him with

his wants at the cheapest rate, is not likely to procure them through any other channel. Such, indeed, are the advantages and facilities, with which our impolitic lenity has provided him, that the colonial produce of France, Holland, and Spain, can be transported from their respective settlements in the Atlantic to the mother-countries, and there delivered into the factor's hands, on much lower terms than we, with our decisive and acknowledged naval superiority over the combined fleets of the world, can obtain similar articles from our own islands; our convoy duty, with other heavy imposts generated by a state of war, together with freight, insurance, and commission, amounting to a much heavier per centage on the prime cost than that which the neutral merchant and ship-owner jointly require. We thus deprive ourselves of one of the chief advantages of our maritime ascendancy; our officers and sailors lose the fair reward of their valour and their toils, by having a most lucrative branch of prize-money cut off; the British merchant is oppressed, and excluded from all chance of competition with foreigners; and, above

all, our national enemy and rival is assisted in his resources, and provided with his wants:

To these crying evils there is fortunately a remedy of which it is to be hoped that the courage and vigour of the present Administration will, without further loss of time, avail themselves. It is folly to be cavilling like polemics, or moralizing like casuists, when we should be acting like statesmen. It is absurd to continue debating on the means of defence, when the enemy is at our door. Buonaparte's arms are of that description, that we must not confide in a coat of mail for resistance; we must repel them at once, by returning the blow. If a man attack me with a blunderbuss, I cannot defend myself with my fist. His conduct suggests mine: his weapons are only to be successfully encountered by similar ones to which he obliges me to have recourse.

On these grounds, if we wish to be just towards ourselves, and eventually towards others, we can no longer hesitate about the

measures which it behoves us to pursue. This is not the moment for tardy deliberation, but for instant action. This is not the moment to be compassionate towards others, but to vindicate ourselves. In conjunctures such as this, indulgence bespeaks want of spirit, and relaxation of authority insinuates incapacity to enforce it. Instead, then, of receding from antient claims, and surrendering antient rights, we must assert them with additional vigour, and carry them in a manner at once indicative of our intention, and demonstrative of our means. When we have enforced obedience, then is the opportunity to shew charity, and to cultivate conciliation; but we must first enforce it, and any subsequent alteration in our demeanour must be entirely an act of grace. We must prevent others, who, whatever their inclinations may be, if they be not deprived of the means of offence, we may rest assured, will be compelled by our inexorable adversary to employ them to our detriment.

Statesmen, of late years, expecting to gain by moderation what is only to be ac-

quired by coercion, have been governed, in their intercourse with neutral states, by very opposite principles. As long as matters were not pushed to extremity, there was an apparent generosity in their plan, and they might also, in some degree, be justified on the score of policy. But as times have advanced, and circumstances have revealed themselves, their justification has diminished, and what was laudable, or at least excusable, a few years back, at this moment would betray tokens of a very contrary description. I have ever been of opinion, that when it is once determined that any strong measure in politics will be eventually necessary, it is much the best way to carry it into immediate execution; for however harsh and unseemly it may appear at the commencement, it spares in the end much trouble, much expence, and frequently much bloodshed. No momentary calamity can equal the multifarious and accumulated evils of protracted warfare, and it is the undoubted duty of those who govern, by a proper use of the weapons which are confided to their discretion, to avoid as much as possible

the anxiety of procrastination, and by wielding them with fortitude, activity, and address, to convert them to their most appropriate application.

Much has been indisputably lost to the interests, and, I fear, to the character of this country, from a failure, on the part of our governors, in these points. The late administration was, in this respect, unaccountably defective. I say unaccountably; because many of its members were men of undoubted talents, and in every point of view entitled to our esteem. But when they first came into power, their time was too much occupied in making provisions for their friends; and when these arrangements were gone through, their whole attention was engrossed by speculations on domestic policy. External affairs were sadly neglected and mismanaged. Instead of vigorously aiding our allies, all applications from them were either coldly listened to, or disdainfully rejected. Instead of enforcing among neutrals an acknowledgment of antient maxims, and an obedience to old established rights; maxims and rights

which have been long universally assented to; which have been supported by the authority of every eminent expounder of this branch of the law of nations; and which, for centuries past, have been practically acted upon by every maritime state; they, in innumerable instances, most pitifully conceded. It could not have been from fear; that would be a ridiculous supposition; for the paltry means of defence with which neutrals are provided, could never have awakened any such emotion: yet they shrunk from the contest, with as much apparent alarm as if our cause were, in every respect, defenceless. All neutrals have, throughout this war, been suffered to trench, more or less, on our maritime rights. Their encroachments have been, generally, progressive; but the Americans, in particular, have been permitted to carry them to an extent, which has amounted both to a contempt of our power and a total disregard of the honour of our flag. They have been allowed to range, without molestation, wherever their enterprise or their avarice has invited them; and, by the most gross and shameless frauds, to cover

the property of our enemies, and to administer to their most imperious wants. Our unexpected forbearance has begotten in them a species of insolence, which it has been long necessary to repress. They now venture to talk to us in a tone, as if not only the privilege of action, but the power of chastisement, resided with them. They have preferred pretensions, which till lately were never heard of, and have urged them with a pertinacity which they never would have dared to manifest, had not our unaccountable acquiescence in their gradual attacks encouraged them to proceed. If the right of search has not been formally abandoned, it has been exercised within such narrow limits, that its efficacy is destroyed; and the immunities which neutrals have at length assumed, amount to an almost total liberation from restraint.

The vessels of states, styling themselves neutral, are now suffered to trade with the colonies of our enemies, with such slight molestation; the right of search or detention is so little insisted on, and so easily evaded by the unequivocal frauds which are prac-

tised, that it is become an act of useless trouble, and had better be altogether relinquished. These vessels, which we know are laden with what till recently was ever regarded as contraband property, may now navigate the seas without danger of confiscation. Thus, although not actually at war with us, they contrive to injure us, according to their means, in a far more serious way. They are the secret agents who distribute wealth to our ostensible foes. By keeping up a constant intercourse with their colonies, and carrying on with them an extensive and destructive commerce, they materially assist them in cultivating those resources which are among the chief sinews of war. The modes which they practise have been sufficiently exposed by the forcible and ingenious author of "War in Disguise;" a work which has been too generally read to render any particular account of their proceedings necessary here. I shall only therefore just cursorily observe, that, arriving at the numerous colonial ports of our declared enemies in ballast, or, at most, with a cargo of lumber worth a few hundred pounds, they return laden

with the most valuable productions. False bills of lading are easily prepared; false oaths are readily made; and thus fortified, they boldly set sail for France, Spain, or Holland, where they deliver the cargo, from the planter to whom it in reality belongs, to the merchant to whom it is in reality consigned. They can, if they are desirous, avoid even their present trifling risk; for it was matter of convention between the late government and the American states, that cargoes of the above description, on being landed in an American port, and paying a small duty, should be exonerated from all detention by our cruizers, and permitted to proceed without molestation wherever they thought fit. In this way has the commerce of our enemies been assisted, and that of Great Britain injured.

It is, however, to be hoped and expected that these abuses, which are so lamentably detrimental to many of our vital interests, will be no longer tolerated; and that we shall, at length, not only assert our ancient and acknowledged rights, but that we shall insist on an obedience to such supplemental

regulations as the altered state of affairs, at this eventful crisis, so imperiously demands. We have the power; and although it is our duty to use it as moderately as circumstances may admit, it is also our duty to use it with efficacy.

There is, evidently, but one method of bringing these abuses to a speedy and positive conclusion; which is, as long as Buonaparte chuses to persevere in his intolerant system, at once to interdict all neutral trade whatever. I would completely assert the ascendancy of the British trident; and, as far as the intercourse with France and her dependents or her allies was concerned, I would not suffer a neutral bark to float upon the seas. What France wanted, she should not acquire, till a duty had been levied on it in some British port; and thus would I compel her to contribute to the prosperity of our commerce, and the support of our maritime strength.

As I before observed, there are, strictly speaking, but two independent nations left; and those who are not our friends, must be

at present, or must speedily become, our enemies. Buonaparte has the complete rule over the continent, which he exercises, according to his own free-will, in the manner which, in his judgment, will prove most injurious to us. We have the complete rule over the seas, which we, in return, should exercise, according to our own free-will, in the manner which, in our judgment, will prove most injurious to him. This is the only mode which he has left us of correcting his audacity, or of disarming his malevolence. Can we then hesitate to adopt it? The public law of Europe is for the present gone. On the part of the continent, it has been dissolved by the tyranny of its usurper: on our part, it has been superseded, by the necessity to which the operation of that tyranny has reduced us. It is not to be expected, that we should continue to acknowledge the validity of those restrictive maxims, which our adversary completely rejects; and, whilst he is ranging at large, entirely released from all confinement, that we, from bigotted scruples of conscience, should fetter ourselves by an implicit obedience to their authority. His acts exonerate us,

in the strictest moral sense, from all obligation. If it is our duty to be kind towards others, that duty can only so far apply as it is consistent with our safety. The strongest law of nature is self-preservation, and to that law, on general principles, every other must bend.

The law of nations must, from its very constitution, be purely conventional. Over the actions of independent states, there can be no sovereignty. There can be no permanent tribunal, to which they can appeal for redress: there can be no judicature to adjust their disputes, or to punish their transgressions. If, therefore, in the civilized parts of the world, a code of laws has gradually grown up, and has been generally acknowledged, it has been from a sense of its utility, and from a conviction of the convenience which has resulted by abstaining from its infraction. It was, no doubt, while it lasted, of infinite benefit to mankind. It has frequently prevented hostility: it has always mitigated the havoc of war, and facilitated the return of peace. By moderating the passions of men, and setting up boundaries which were

respected by common consent, and which even an hostile state was rarely provoked to disregard, it imparted to the efforts of an antagonist a character of justice and clemency, which divested him of the violence of ferocious hatred, and assuaged the fierce animosity of national contention. By tempering the malignant spirit of enmity, its fatal effects were diminished, and its resentments more easily appeased. Even amidst the most melancholy ravages with which wars were occasionally attended, individuals of adverse communities regarded each other with sentiments of humanity. They fomented no feeling of rancorous revenge; and the moment peace was restored, the wounds which had been inflicted were at once healed, and even the memory of them was obliterated.

But an enemy has now started up, who is evidently determined to force back society to the barbarous doctrines of savage and untutored life, and completely to expunge from the institutes of public law every maxim by which man, in his civilized state, has been hitherto controuled. The

ravages of this cruel spoiler are only to be resisted by the arms which he himself employs. And the sooner he is repelled, the better for suffering humanity; for not till then can they hope to be restored to the enjoyment of those privileges, or the protection of those laws, under which they have been accustomed to live, and from which their most valuable blessings have been indisputably derived.

Thus, with whatever reluctance and grief, we absolutely must, in our own defence, and as the last resource left to bind down our antagonist to some state of reasonable subordination, suspend the operation of public law. We must impede the irregularity of his incursions, by letting him feel the extent of the penalty which he is striving to inflict on us, and thus compel him to abandon the profligacy of his career. What in him is the basest and most wanton depravity, is reduced in us to nothing more than justifiable retaliation. It is, in fact, the only mode by which we can rescue ourselves and others from impending evils of no light complexion. It is only

by a prompt and bold interference, that what has been lost can be retrieved. If we continue to yield much longer, recovery may be placed beyond the horizon of hope. When we have driven him back within the prescriptive confines of justice, we, who only overleaped them in his pursuit, shall voluntarily return, satisfied with the proud distinction of having restored to the practice of christian nations the doctrines of civilized and social existence.

It is very evident that if we vigorously enforce that extended right of search, which is consonant to our political welfare, and put a complete stop to all neutral intercourse with France and her allies, by absolutely prohibiting vessels, navigating under a neutral flag, from conveying thither their colonial produce, we shall cut off the only channel through which they are accustomed to receive every foreign commodity. In that case the underhand commerce, from which they at present derive innumerable benefits, will be at once annihilated, and Great Britain, becoming the

only emporium, whatever France requires from the stock of foreign lands, to feed her wants, or to administer to her luxuries, she must apply for to us. We should then be totally independent of others, and most of the advantages which we enjoyed would be exclusively our own. We could then, without hazard, fix an arbitrary price on every article of exportation, and in proportion as France opposed obstacles, would the expence of procuring her necessities be increased. She being the chief sufferer would soon find it her interest to repeal her non-importation laws, and diminish her restraining duties. Instead of endeavouring any longer to thwart our trade, she would court its conveniences, and the different markets of Europe would again become eager competitors for a commercial connexion with this country.

With all his power, what, in fact, can Buonaparte do to interrupt the pursuits of trade compared with us? He can subject it to inconveniences; but we can at once destroy it. Neither his vigilance, nor his authority, nor his malevolence,

can extend beyond a partial prohibition; but we can completely impede its operation. Whilst he has his wants provided through a neutral medium, he can no doubt, with impunity, exclude our manufactures and produce from his ports; but we can, whenever we chuse, cut off this medium, and shut his ports against every supply. He can enforce his regulations on shore; but our jurisdiction is more extensive. We can scour the seas in every latitude, and deprive France of the possession of every transmarine commodity. We can banish her from the east, and the west, from the north, and the south, and, unless by our permission, she cannot obtain an article of the produce of nature but what her own soil affords. Other nations would undoubtedly suffer with her, but she would be the cause of their sufferings as well as of her own. By such considerations, therefore, we ought not to be restrained. Partial evils are often inseparable from great positive benefits, and, in times of difficulty and danger, we must not reject an evident advantage merely because it is attended with colla-

teral inconveniences. The system, in our hands, would moreover be enforced, whilst it lasted, with feelings of charity and conciliation, nor should we persevere in it beyond the term of its palpable necessity.

The well concerted expedition against Zealand, which has had so brilliant a termination, certainly augurs well. The whole conduct and execution of this important affair have been truly illustrative of the virtues of the British character. Throughout the operations both of our army and our fleet, generosity accompanied firmness, and courage was tempered by humanity. Nothing was done but what was absolutely necessary for the attainment of our object. Not a shot was fired till every effort at negotiation had failed. Nor was the triumph of victory sullied by any of those excesses which are so frequently committed by an elated soldiery. The severest discipline was in all quarters maintained. Persons and property were equally respected. Even the feelings of the inhabitants were spared, and the exultation of

success gave way to the esteem which was due to their bravery, and the compassion which was excited by their misfortunes. What a contrast to the capture of a besieged town by a French army! The seizure of the Danish marine is a masterly stroke of political sagacity. Indeed, the entire transaction reflects infinite credit on the present administration. Compared with the pitiful or disastrous schemes of their predecessors, it cannot fail to establish their reputation on the broad basis of public opinion. The preparations were made with a celerity and a secrecy, such as, of late years, have not very frequently characterised the measures of our cabinet, and what was of still greater moment, the force dispatched was adequate to the accomplishment of the object in view. It was a coherent and consistent plan, well digested and organized throughout, and which has been no less admirable in its developement than in its conception. It has given proofs of a degree of vigour worthy of the exhaustless resources with which this country is blessed, and has evinced a determination to depart from those creeping maxims, and

to burst asunder those oppressive chains, by which our best energies have for so long a time been shackled. It has also regenerated for us a character as politicians, which the late administration had suffered to fall into utter contempt; and whilst the nations of Europe were imagining that we were crouching under the superiority of Buonaparte's genius, and were rendered incapable of any important enterprise, it has exposed the fallacy of their expectations, and has taught them that we have still sense left to contrive, courage to attempt, and power to accomplish.

A great outcry has nevertheless been raised by a particular set of partizans against the immorality of these proceedings. But it is natural, that those who would destroy us by their inactivity, should loudly carp at what is now the only policy left to reinstate our affairs. It is in them a perfectly consistent conduct. What their neglect or mismanagement would lose, they regret to see secured by the energy and skill of their rivals. It is a fatal blow to their political fame, and must remove to the vanishing

point of perspective, all rational hope of a return to power. We are thus asked a whole string of questions, such as "what right had we to invade a neutral state; to molest a friendly power; to depart from the law of nations?" with a multitude of others equally significant and pertinent. My answer to all these interrogatories, and I mean it to apply to whatever else of a correspondent nature we may think fit to do, is this: That our interest, and by interest I mean, in this instance, that definition of it, which amounts to necessity, required such a proceeding. Independently of this, which however I do not purpose to advance as having influenced the motive, or induced the act, the Danes will ultimately be gainers. It is however a satisfactory coincidence in their favour. As they must have fallen either to Britain or to France, there can be no question which will prove the mildest and most generous master. France invades to destroy: we invade to avert that destruction. When France conquers, she sternly places every thing at the mercy of the sword: when we conquer, the justice and benignity of our

domestic laws equally shelter the persons and the property of those, whom the fortune of war has placed at our disposal. Wherever French power penetrates, all the horrors of private pillage and public confiscation, of insult and oppression of every denomination, are dealt forth with unrelenting austerity: wherever British power interposes, it faithfully upholds the sanctity of religion, the authority of jurisdiction, and preserves, with inviolable honour, every claim of private property and of personal freedom. By our invasion of Denmark, we have secured the prize which the French chiefly coveted; and, by thus removing the principal motive for their attack, have probably averted the frightful outrages of their subjugation. By taking possession of the Danish fleet, we have prevented it from being delivered up to a government already too strong, and which would only have employed it as an additional instrument to tyrannise over mankind. In the hands of France, it would have been forfeited for ever: in our hands, it may possibly, at some future period, be restored.

It has been further demanded, how we could be certain that France would have molested the Danes? But after what France has done, such an inquiry is almost too childish to deserve a reply. After the direful examples which, on every side, surround us, are we then to wait till France is in actual possession, before we begin to suspect her intentions? Has she approved herself so scrupulous, so delicate in her proceedings; has she betrayed such a regard for justice, and such a tenderness of giving offence; that we must be charged with having committed against her an act of indefensible suspicion, when we imagine that she may be prevailed on to swerve from the path of political rectitude? But even if we were not allowed to guess at her designs, has she not publicly declared them? Has she not told us, that she will not suffer a European port to be open to the reception of our commerce? To carry this threat into execution, has she not annulled the jurisdiction and municipal laws of all the free towns of Germany; has she not barricaded every port in the Mediterranean; has she not entered into a

scheme with the emperor of Russia to shut up the ports of the Baltic; has she not obliged the Turks to banish us from the ports of the Archipelago; has she not expelled the Swedes from Pomerania; has she not assembled an army for the invasion of Holstein, and concerted measures for closing the passage of the Sound; and has she not published her intention of invading Portugal, and of obliging the family of Braganza to abdicate the throne, that her chief may extend to that unfortunate and defenceless country the curse of his sovereignty? When people ask what the Danes have done to kindle Buonaparte's resentment, let them also ask what the Portuguese have done. They have done nothing: they have even done less than the Danes; for with an equal impotency or desire to molest France, or to resist her insult and oppression, they have, more than once, purchased their neutrality at an enormous expence. In order to preserve, during Buonaparte's pleasure, the fallacious appearance of independence, immense sums have been extorted from them, and they have been degraded to the rank of a tributary

state. The allurement of Portugal is her wealth; her crime, keeping up with Great Britain a commercial connexion. Buonaparte, therefore, is stimulated to the fulfilment of his denunciation by the three most powerful motives which have hitherto been the rule of his action: namely, his ambition, his avarice, and his revenge. Justice never enters into his contemplation; his doctrines are throughout Machiavelian. Artifice imposes on credulity, stratagem supplants honour, and power constitutes right. Whenever his vanity, his cupidity, or his resentment is to be gratified, it is equally idle to attempt to awe him by the decrees of justice, or to sooth him by the language of supplication.

The power of France has grown up on the continent, chiefly, from the cowardice, treachery, and stupidity of those states which have been subdued; but partly, from the mismanagement and supineness of this country. Such has been her unexampled success, that all resistance, except ours, is already crushed; and she has cer-

tainly become sufficiently formidable, even to this last barrier against universal dominion. Danger is not to be avoided by glancing at it side-ways. If we wish to escape it, we must not disguise it by optical deceptions: we must look it full in the face, and minutely examine it in all its properties and parts. And if we thus survey it, we must confess it to be great. But if our adversary has powerful means at his disposal, and is actuated by a fixed determination to exert those means in the way most likely to prove fatal to us; we have the consolation to know, that we are also blessed with powerful means, and with resources which, if properly called forth and applied, are not only completely adequate to the maintenance of our independence, but to impress on his mind a conviction that we are more than equal to him in the contest. But to effect this, no timid policy, no ordinary exertion, will be sufficient. We must be strenuous in our resolutions, energetic in our operations. Discarding the tameness of hesitation, we must boldly step forth to action, erect in countenance, firm in our advances, and clad in the stout-

est armour of defence, the justice of our cause. By making the country intimately acquainted with its real situation, we must infuse into its population that spirit which is commensurate with the difficulty and the magnitude of the occasion. By so doing, by explaining every thing, and concealing nothing, we shall familiarize them with the contemplation of those great sacrifices to which they must be called upon to submit, and which can alone secure a triumphant issue to the arduous struggle in which they are embarked.

Whilst the present painful crisis lasts, things should be so ordered and arranged, that, whatever circumstances may ultimately arise, we may be fully prepared to meet them. Independently of our naval superiority, and those numerous signal advantages which appertain to our insular situation, we should be defended by a military force sufficient, without any confederate aid, to combat the legions of our enemy. And such a force might, I conceive, be raised, without any material inconvenience to the civil pursuits of

the country. The plans for this object, which have been officially laid before parliament, are obviously inadequate; and of all those which have been submitted to public consideration, that suggested by Lord Selkirk is evidently the most complete. With very trifling alterations, which would best suggest themselves upon experiment, I am convinced that it might be carried into execution. It might occasion murmuring at first; but as soon as the nation was satisfied that their safety depended upon it, that murmuring would be changed into applause. Besides, if the contrary were the case, no government should be deterred from the pursuit of what is right, by the dread of what is unpopular. They should proceed, unmoved by complaint; and they should reflect, that the time may come when, if they shrink from their duty, they may have more to fear from popular clamour and resentment for having provided too little, than for having provided too much. When existence is at stake, it is better to err from caution than from negligence. We then at least err on the right side; and, in the

mean time, the security which is afforded amply compensates for the inconvenience which is caused. It is impossible to dive into the events of futurity. All that human wisdom can do, is to conjecture by reasoning from analogy. The best prudence, at all events, is, by computing from possible contingencies, to be fortified against every reverse. The moment of danger is not the moment of counsel, and should we at any period be surprised by the activity of a vindictive foe, however advanced our preparations may be, we shall have abundance left to occupy our attention. We have now leisure to modify and arrange our plans, and by not postponing our exertions, whatever may occur, we shall have nothing to dread.

Regarded as to means of defence, this country is perhaps beyond every other on earth calculated for resistance. It is in possession of every advantage which can enable it to assert, or which can tend to confirm and perpetuate, its independence. Surrounded by the sea; furnished with innumerable strong positions; abundant in

population; fruitful in soil; inexhaustible in wealth; a free government; and, above all, a resolute, high-minded, and warlike people; a people generous as they are brave; impatient of domestic usurpation; and indignant at the thoughts of foreign slavery; equally signalized in arts and arms; devoted to their religion from the conviction of reason; enamoured of their laws, which have been acquired by their blood; indissolubly attached to their customs, and averse to those of foreign lands; anxious to acquit themselves of those sacred obligations, which belong to them as the members of a great community; inspired by the example of recent achievements; and whose history unfolds to their imitation a series of heroic exploits: with such a people, a wise and paternal government can accomplish every thing. The materials are at hand, and if not found answerable to the occasion, the fault will lie in the use to which they are put. It is my firm and unalterable opinion, that, if this country should ever fall, the blame will not belong to those who are ruled, but to those who rule.

When we consider what would be our lot, should we be subdued by the present government of France, there surely is enough to awaken caution, and to excite activity. When we recollect the threats which our adversary has uttered against us, and figure to ourselves how infinitely those threats would be surpassed by his acts, we surely can consider nothing as a hardship which contributes to our safety. No pen can describe, nor can imagination well conceive, the misery of our fate, if we were once at the disposal of the tyrant of France. The sufferings of other countries, which have basely received his yoke, have been sufficient to harrow up the heart, and to wring the very soul with anguish; yet mild have been their sufferings, to the horrors of that destiny to which we should be doomed to submit. Their calamities have chiefly arisen from the temporary indulgence of base passions, from the licentiousness of victory, the avarice of plunder, or the dissipation of pleasure. Having favoured, rather than opposed Buonaparte's success, they have been treated more with a feeling of contempt excited by weakness,

than with a feeling of revenge provoked by resistance. But we have acted a worthier part. We have not only been the opposer, but the rival of France. In feats of prowess we have imitated her; in every thing else that is laudable we have surpassed her. Our cause has been sanctified by its justice, and has embraced every benefit which dignifies or embellishes the blessings of life: her's is founded in usurpation, and has been maintained by every atrocity of which human nature can be guilty. We have aimed at the perpetuation of civil society; she has nearly completed its ruin. Against the entire fulfilment of her designs, we have been, and still continue to be, a solitary obstacle. In proportion as that obstacle has been effectual, has the rancour of vengeance been kindled in her unrelenting breast; and, that obstacle removed, she would rush upon us with all the fury of which her diabolical nature is capable. As our defence has been glorious, so would our chastisement be severe. As we have been worthy of her esteem, so should we feel her resentment. It would be the purport of our new master, to-

tally to extinguish every noble or manly feeling; to train us to burdens and stripes; to break us in to the endurance of his dispensations, by subduing every humanized sentiment of the soul. Our monarchy would be subverted; our royal family, our bishops, our nobles, our judges, our most distinguished naval and military officers, our chief commoners, would be barbarously butchered; our remaining gentry, our yeomanry, our peasantry, would be reduced to the most galling and abject servitude. Add to this, the profanation of our altars; the abolition of our laws; the destruction of our courts of justice; the total ruin of our agriculture, our commerce, our manufactures, and our arts. We might weep over the recollection of former happiness; we might mourn over the tomb of departed greatness; but useless would be our tears, and unavailing our regret: they would only expose us to fresh indignities, to the taunts and mockery of our fell destroyers. No longer would the house of an Englishman be his castle, no longer would it be a sanctuary under the protection of the constitution. Neither

this, nor any other privilege would continue to exist; but every thing that we have been taught to venerate or love, would be indiscriminately delivered up to the consuming rapacity of plunder, the gross appetency of lust, and the exterminating rage of tumultuous revenge. Every description of property would be wrested from us; not a shadow of personal freedom would remain; and, whilst our women were abandoned to the promiscuous embraces of a brutal soldiery, the blood of our parents and our children would moisten the invader's sword. Every base and baleful passion would be allowed an unrestrained course, and the infernal agents of the despot's will would be recompensed in proportion as they diffused the havoc of his vengeance.

It is to guard against such evils, it is to shield us against such dire calamities, of which this description is but a feeble delineation, that the government and the people of this hitherto free and happy land, are called upon for exertion. Independently of those considerations in which

our own interests are more immediately concerned, we have a glorious example to hold forth to the world. We have to convince other nations, how that misfortunes might have been averted had they sincerely struggled in the same cause, and, through that conviction, to animate them, at some future period, to attempt to recover by courage what cowardice has lost. We have further to consider, that this land is now the last refuge of virtue, the last asylum of liberty, the last sanctuary of religion, the last barrier against the inroads of military despotism, and the utter dissolution of political independence. We have to consider, that if it perish, every blessing and ornament of life will perish with it, and that the wretched and degraded state to which it will be reduced, will be rendered still more intolerable by the recollection of former happiness. If, then, there ever was any thing in human affairs worthy of affection; if ever there was any thing truly majestic and interesting in the fate of humanity; any situation worthy of inspiring the holy fervour of enlightened patriotism, the sacred resolution of unani-

mous devotion, it is that which this great country at this tremendous crisis exhibits.

Nor must we flatter ourselves, that we are near the conclusion of our troubles. We are possibly at the commencement of far greater than any that we have yet experienced. This is a conjecture full of awe, but not of a nature to dishearten us. A brave and gallant people rise in spirit in proportion to the trials which await them, and always display qualities answerable to the emergency which presents itself. Many there are, I know, who are silly enough to cherish hopes of a speedy peace: some there are, who, from selfish views, are wicked enough to wish to purchase that event at any price. How indeed is it to be brought about, except by the debasement of our honour and the capitulation of our rights; by the acknowledgment of Buonaparte's host of vagrant kings, and the surrender of that high political ascendancy which we have hitherto so proudly maintained? Even with a submission to these mortifications and disadvantages to aid us in its accomplishment, could we

hope to insure its duration? It is absurd to entertain such a notion. We should only be the slaves of our baseness, or the dupes of our credulity. We can never live on terms of friendship with the present government of France. The hatred of her tyrant is too deadly, the causes of that hatred are too deep-rooted, ever to admit of repose to his malice, when we are the subject of his meditation. We may consent to a truce; we may agree to a treaty; but we can never conclude a solid and cordial peace. Never can we expect the rancourous resentment with which he surveys us to be immerged in oblivion, or disarmed of its sting. He too well knows that his security depends on our destruction. As long as we continue to hold out the example of valour and freedom to Europe and to France, he is too well aware that he can never be safe. Of such an example he dreads the contagion. Whilst we are prosperous and happy, we can never tranquillize his fears by becoming the object of his scorn. Our happiness makes his crown totter on his brow, and undermines the perishable foundations of his

throne. Our prosperity is a thorn which is perpetually festering in his side : it is a gangrene which ulcerates his passions, and corrodes his heart. As long, therefore, as he lives, we must be prepared for war. We must banish from our thoughts all sordid and reptile views, and assiduously cultivate those masculine virtues which, by rendering us conversant with danger, will enable us to face it undismayed. We must nourish our courage with the wholesome aliment of endurance. We must foster the cardinal virtue of patience. There is frequently more intrepid fortitude displayed in the period which precedes the attack, than in the crisis which encounters it. The former may be a momentary act of desperation; but the latter bespeaks that true expansion and sublimity of soul, which can contemplate peril under all its modifications with undaunted resolution.

Let us, then, whilst humiliating ourselves before God, and devoutly craving his Almighty protection, firmly resolve to perform our several parts, in a manner worthy of the righteous cause which is committed

to our defence, and which will be equally calculated to sustain past celebrity and present hope. Let all ranks emulate each other in the conscientious discharge of these pious obligations, and, suppressing the feelings of domestic disunion, and the bitterness of party animosity, unite, with one common consent, in the most glorious of all human occupations, the preservation of National Independence. If, after such endeavours, it should still be our destiny to fall, we shall at least have reserved the best consolation which adversity can afford, that of having faithfully acquitted ourselves of our duty. Instead of having cowered with the dastardly humility of slaves, we shall have contended with the generous courage of freemen; and, whilst our glorious resistance will have diminished the value of the conquest, it will rear a mausoleum to our memory at which our posterity will have no reason to blush.

London, Sept. 25, 1807.

POSTSCRIPT.

HIS Majesty's declaration, on the subject of the invasion of Zealand, was inserted in the newspapers the day after this pamphlet was published, and is of a nature to remove the scruples of the most casuistical, and to neutralize the cavils of the most querulous. It is one of the most eloquent, energetic, and consistent state papers that has for a long time appeared; and it affords an additional instance of the vigour and talent which are resident in the present cabinet. No doubts can possibly be any longer entertained as to the justification of the measure. We have his Majesty's royal word, that " he had received the most positive information of the determination of the present ruler of France to occupy, with a military force, the territory of Holstein, for the purpose of excluding Great Britain from all her accustomed channels of communication with the continent; of inducing or compelling

the court of Denmark to close the passage of the Sound against the British commerce and navigation; and of availing himself of the aid of the Danish marine for the invasion of Great Britain and Ireland."* The incapacity of Denmark to resist, is appositely and legitimately deduced from her own acknowledgment on a former occasion, when the danger was by no means so imminent. How little, in fact, she was competent to her own defence, our recent operations have plainly demonstrated. The whole affair was thus reduced to this simple question: Whether we, positively knowing that Buonaparte had matured a scheme, to appropriate to his use, and to our annoyance, the naval strength of Denmark, were not warranted in endeavouring to defeat this intention of his malevolent and destructive ambition? If the Danes had been even strictly impartial in their neutrality, no one could well have pretended to criminate us for an act in which our safety was so deeply concerned. But when we were in possession of pretty clear

* See Declaration dated Westminster, Sept. 25, 1807.

proofs that the French had been tampering with the Danes, and that the Danes were, either from inclination or timidity, disposed to listen to their proposals, the necessity of our interference became so urgent, that had our ministers remained inactive, they would have been guilty of treachery to the state, and would have justly merited the bitterest indignation of their country. There is, however, a wide interval between the different degrees of activity which may be exerted in cases of such extremity. Some might have been active to the utmost of their ability, and yet to very little purpose: but here was an activity which secured its object, an object which the French were at the same time seeking, and for which they had been long clandestinely making arrangements.

As the circumstances which led to this determination of our cabinet are now unfolded, we can fairly pronounce judgment on its merits; and we must allow that it exhibits one of the most dexterous strokes of political address that was ever attempted. Whilst it is thus calculated to meet the

sterner views of the politician, it has also been managed in a manner to satisfy the most strenuous advocates for generous moderation. The mild and conciliating, yet manly sentiments which the declaration throughout displays, must indeed command the applause of all who feel a genuine attachment to the honour and interests of their country. Now that Denmark is at our feet, we do not trample upon her, like the Corsican despot: now that her capital is in our power, we do not deliver it up to military carnage and plunder, like the revolutionary upstart of France. These are not dispensations consonant with the feelings of the monarch, or the government, or the people of Great Britain. A vanquished foe is with us a foe no longer. Having obtained our object, in the acquisition of which our safety was materially involved, we go not a step farther; but, on the contrary, we manifest every disposition to alleviate distress, to console affliction, to cultivate friendship, and to repair the breach which we have involuntarily, but unavoidably made.

The necessity of that decisive policy, which I have, in the foregoing pages, endeavoured to recommend, becomes every day more cogent. Buonaparte pursues his plan of usurpation with accumulating power, and with unremitting zeal. To his inordinate ambition nothing can minister repose. Neither truce nor peace can avert his design, or arrest his progress. His determined aim is universal dominion: his means are open war, or secret intrigue, or treacherous negotiation, as they are best adapted to his nefarious purpose. When will the veil of delusion be torn from the eyes of continental councils? How long will mankind continue to be so obdurately blind to their approaching fate? Buonaparte has at last completely overreached the three once formidable continental states, Russia, Austria, and Prussia; and now that he has strengthened his position, and weakened theirs, he is again provoking a rupture. Cattaro and the Seven Islands have been ceded to him by Russia, by treaty; Trieste and Fiume he has taken from Austria, by

force;* Prussia has lost half her territories, after an inglorious war. We thus find that Prussia is prostrate; Austria is trembling for her safety; and if Russia now renew hostilities, her capital may possibly be captured, and every province of her empire may become a prey to the horrors of revolutionary destruction. Let us profit, whilst there is yet time, by these dreadful examples!

Amidst the general wishes for the immediate adoption of the vigorous system, which I have ventured to recommend, there are a few dissentient persons, who urge, rather however boisterously than argumentatively, two objections; the first, on the score of policy; the second, on the score of morals.

These objections are plausible, and, if they were valid, would be conclusive. But I think that I shall have little difficulty in demonstrating their total futility.

* It does not seem certain that this event has yet taken place. If, however, it has not, I have only, I fancy, anticipated it by a few months.

When I insist on the necessity of putting an end to neutral traffic, I, of course, confine my remarks to that branch of it which contributes to the resources of our enemies: what benefits ourselves, it is obviously our policy, not only to tolerate, but to encourage and protect.

In obedience to these principles, we should instantly abolish every kind of intercourse between France and her colonies, and also between those colonies and neutral states. This we are, incontestably, authorized to do, without deviating, in the slightest degree, from old established maxims. The commerce which France did not permit to neutrals during peace, they can have no right nor pretension to engage in during war, even though France take off the restraint; because, in that case, the consent of France is granted solely in consideration of the benefit which their intervention confers. In proportion, however, as it aids her, it must injure us: we, consequently, are perfectly justified in obstructing it.

The rigorous exercise of this preventive

measure, by materially diminishing the supply of West India produce conveyed to Europe, would, in an inverse ratio, enhance the value of that part of it which is the growth of our own islands. Such, indeed, would be the increased demand on us for these requisite articles, in consequence of the great deduction from the general stock, that we might safely lay very heavy additional imposts on their exportation, which our enemies would be compelled to pay. Neutral vessels, instead of visiting the colonies of hostile countries as heretofore, which, under these circumstances, would be attended with considerable risk, would find their account in coming in ballast to the ports of this kingdom, in quest of commodities, for which the principal markets of Europe will always insure a ready sale.

We should pursue a similar plan of prohibition and controul with regard to the productions of the East; nor should we suffer neutral vessels, of any description, to touch at any port in Bengal, or in any of our other settlements in that quarter, for the

purposes of trade. And although we might still permit their free communication with China, as far as their own wants were concerned, yet we should, on no account, allow them to transport their cargoes from that country, or from any other, directly to France, every haven of which empire should be instantly declared in a state of rigorous blockade. Surely, when France has issued a declaration to that effect against us, there can be no question about our right to retaliate. Most of the articles which France receives from Russia and the other northern states, being naval stores, come under the denomination of contraband, according to the old definition, and are thus liable to confiscation. Russia indeed, in particular, after the treaty of Tilsit, the most disgraceful that was ever signed by an independent government, in ancient or modern times, is not entitled to much favour from us. Were such regulations strictly and literally enforced, our own merchants and manufacturers would be speedily released from the heavy pressure of their present difficulties, and the public revenue would, at the same

time, be, in various ways, greatly assisted and improved.

Whilst we were deriving these manifest and important advantages, what, with all his power, could Buonaparte do to impede their course? What could he even do, to extricate himself from such serious and increasing embarrassments? There are numerous articles of indispensable necessity, whether of direct consumption, or for the purpose of manufacture, which the soil of France and of her continental dependents does not afford. These they must still have, and as they could only procure them through the medium of this country, both the value and the quantity would be governed by our discretion.

It may be a fanciful, but it is a most preposterous hypothesis to suppose, that Buonaparte could enforce prohibitory edicts, or that he should even be disposed to enforce them, to debar from the use of these commodities the population of the countries over which he rules. Nor is it

likely that he would be inclined to increase those charges and difficulties, which we should take care to render sufficiently burdensome. Even at this moment, with all his vengeful disposition, what is necessary to France, and can only be procured from England, still finds its way. In commercial undertakings, where there is much risk, there is generally a correspondent compensation; and when the desire of obtaining any thing is very pressing, the ingenuity of mankind readily discovers a method of arriving at its end. Buonaparte's extensive coast, which is so beneficial to him in some points of view, is, in others, highly inconvenient, especially in those respects which regard the enforcement of oppressive non-importation laws. We know perfectly well, from our own experience, that custom-house and excise officers are not among the most immaculate members of society, and, under such a government as that of France, without overstraining the powers of imagination, or being at all libellously disposed, we may conceive, that

the contagion of their vices contaminates the conduct of their superiors.*

But supposing Buonaparte's power and vigilance to be sufficient, totally to suppress the importation of our colonial merchandize, and that his frantic vengeance should induce the full exertion of that power and vigilance, the consequences, reverberating on himself, would be felt with tenfold severity. How has France been hitherto enabled to uphold her finances, but by the most arbitrary and vexatious exactions from her general population, and by the pillage of rich manufacturing and commercial towns which have fallen under her sway, and which, if deprived of the means of subsistence, would become a burden instead of a support? How would she be able to feed those manufactures which employ the industry of her own artizans, even with what is ne-

* It is indeed notorious, that the salaries of the higher officers on these stations, which are nominally very small, and are very irregularly paid, are chiefly made up from the perquisites of bribery and other wages of corruption.

cessary for her interior consumption, without the raw materials from which they are made? And if Buonaparte is to domineer over a ruined people, how is he to maintain his numerous armies, and to defray those enormous expences which are inseparable from the profligate luxury and tasteless profusion of usurped royalty? I am aware that it will here be objected, that when I draw inferences from the supposition of financial embarrassments, my premises are false; and that long and fatal experience has completely exposed their fallibility. To this I reply, that if our previous calculations on this head have proved so deceptious, it is chiefly because we have failed to pursue that system which is most likely to produce the desired effect. France has hitherto been abundantly supplied with all her wants through the channel of neutrality, and on such easy terms, that they have come into the hands of the consumer at a cheaper price, than if she had maintained a protecting navy, and imported them in her own shipping. The rest of Europe, under her dominion, has been provided in the same

way, and on the same conditions. But the moment we dissolve this illegal traffic, these advantages must cease, and this country must become the grand and exclusive emporium from which transmarine productions can be obtained.

Our complete supremacy at sea furnishes us with other inexhaustible advantages, which we cannot be too active in employing as the most effectual security for their preservation. The vengeance which it enables us to inflict, should be exerted in every mode, and felt in every direction. To such a foe as Buonaparte we should allow no respite.

The possession of the Danish fleet has, at once, added a considerable numerical force to our navy, which we should hasten to convert to the most beneficial purposes. This acquisition has been, by a particular set of people, most ridiculously undervalued. The truth however is, that many of these ships are quite new, and, although not so elegant in their form as our own, they would, when manned by British sea-

men, be able to keep the line, in an engagement, as well as any others. Some, which are not so fit for this service, might be made use of as transports, by which much time would be saved on any emergency when this description of vessels was wanted, and a considerable reduction in hire would be also effected. The third class, which would be least calculated for the open sea, might be fitted up in different havens as floating barracks, on board of which from 10 to 15,000 soldiers might be constantly embarked. This body might be changed every two or three months, so that we should always have a force ready to undertake any sudden enterprize, and the whole of our army would, by degrees, be habituated to a sea-faring life. Under proper regulations, these barracks would be attended with less expence than those on shore, and might be rendered fully as healthy and convenient.

Another object which, in my opinion, should never be absent from the contemplation of our government, is the destruction of Boulogne, and of every other har-

bour or fishing town which is exposed to our annoyance along the whole range of the French coast. Various reports have been circulated, about the flotilla at Boulogne being in a decayed state. I have heard a very different account, and which, I am confident, approaches much nearer the truth. Nor is it to be supposed that Buonaparte, after having expended such an immense sum in their construction, would suffer them to perish, by withholding the trifling sum which would be requisite to keep them in repair. But if they were even in a state of rottenness, I would still attack them in that state, because, if we can once prove to France and to this country that the bason of Boulogne, where the means of invasion must be chiefly assembled, is within our reach, that question, which with the increased power of Buonaparte must be viewed with increased anxiety by us, will be, in great measure, divested of its importance. And that this desirable object may be effected by the rockets, which have been so successfully used at Copenhagen, and to which the skill and ingenuity of Mr. Congreve

have given so sure a direction and so astonishing a range, I entertain very little doubt.

To the destruction of Boulogne, if we can accomplish it, consent would, I fancy, be unanimous. But when I talk of destroying fishing-towns, I fear that I shall excite to instant insurrection the whole host of pseudo-philanthropists. What! they exclaim, shall we pursue this ruthless system of extermination? shall we renounce the finest sentiments of humanity? shall we eternally disgrace ourselves by waging a predatory warfare with inoffensive fishermen? This would be all very just, if Europe were still divided, as it formerly was, into separate communities, acknowleging the doctrines of the old code of public law. But we have now, unhappily, to ruminate over a new order of things, which, by a general convulsion of the elements of civilized government, has totally dismembered and dilapidated all the ancient forms, and has accumulated into one overwhelming mass all the heterogeneous properties of which they were

antecedently composed. We have to reflect, that their various resources, thus consolidated, are at the entire disposal of one man, who is incessantly bent on employing them in our destruction: We have further to consider, that this man is in possession of a line of coast which extends from Memel to Brest, and from Brest to Cadiz; which, in addition to this, comprehends nearly the complete circuit of the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, and the Archipelago. We also have to bear in mind, that seven or eight hundred miles of this coast run in a parallel direction with Great Britain, and that nearly as much more is most conveniently situated for the invasion of Ireland. When we have duly weighed these observations, let us next examine how many fishing-towns this length of coast contains; and then let us calculate how many fishermen these towns may provide. Buonaparte's ships of war keep, for the present, to their harbours; and the commercial ships of France have been, long since, driven from the seas. It is thus, in fishing boats alone, that his subjects can have an opportunity

of exercising their skill, or of adding to their experience as sailors. And when we recollect what a hardy race fishermen usually are, how adventurous in fronting danger, and how expert in avoiding it, we must admit the policy of obliging them to recede from the coast, and to abandon their occupations. We know that Buonaparte's most ardent wish is to rival us as a maritime power, by which alone he can ever hope to realize the schemes of his atrocious ambition. We know that, in this view, he is building ships in every harbour which is adapted to the purpose; and that the moment they are launched he can, by a despotic ordinance, compel every one of these fishermen to assist in their navigation. We are bound, therefore, no longer to regard this race of people as inoffensive villagers, gaining a livelihood by their harmless industry, and furnishing with a cheap and wholesome food a beggared and famished population; but as a valuable fund of intrepid warriors, who may one day be disputing with us the empire of the ocean.

Having thus discussed the policy of the measure, I shall now take into consideration the charge of immorality, which has been so gravely alleged against a departure from the ancient usages of the world. Instead, however, of admitting it to be a breach of morality, instead of bowing to any one of those objections which have been started, I contend that it is one of our highest obligations, that it is one of our duties most consistent with the grand interests of humanity, and with the immutable principles of universal justice, so to act.

If a man approach me with a declared determination to destroy me, am I to decline the use of a destructive weapon in my defence, lest, by killing him, I should commit murder? When the interposition of the law can save me, it is, undoubtedly, my duty to apply to it for protection; but when, by being pushed to extremities, there is no time for its interference, I must take my cause into my own hands, and defend myself as well as I can. If this reasoning hold good in the case of an in-

dividual, it surely is infinitely stronger as it applies to the contemplation and direction of national concerns. I hope that I feel for the cause of humanity as deeply, and lament its sufferings as sincerely, as any of those advocates who make such a womanish and ill-timed publication of their emotions. But I look to the welfare of nations more than to the misfortunes of individuals, and I am not to be deterred from the recommendation of a measure which I am convinced will contribute to the general advantage of my country, because it may occasion some few examples of particular distress. When I have only to consider the insulated case of an individual, I am bound to do strict justice to that individual: but when I have to consider the case of the public, individuals, merely as individuals, must be banished from my thoughts. The whole superstructure of all wise and just government must repose on this basis.

The crimes of mankind require restraint, and, in the common concerns of life, it is frequently necessary, for the sake of ex-

ample, to inflict a severity of punishment which we should otherwise be most desirous to relax. If we cannot, in the management of human affairs, act up to ideal perfection, we must approach as near to it as circumstances will admit. But, in our practice, circumstances must determine our conduct. However, therefore, we may be attached to the doctrines of public law; however readily we may acknowlege their justice and utility; yet, if we find ourselves engaged in a most perilous and desperate contest, with an enemy who totally rejects their authority, it cannot be expected that we should implicitly submit to their controul; because, if we did, we should devote ourselves to inevitable destruction. We may lament the departure, but we have no choice. With us it is a measure of uncontrollable necessity, and he who is the cause of it, is evidently responsible for its consequences. If then our enemy refuse to recognise the long-established principles of national law, we, as opposed to him, are immediately released from their observance. If this enemy compel other states to follow his

footsteps, we are also released, as opposed to those states. These are axioms which require no elucidation, and to which, the moment they are propounded, every one must assent. It is now necessary that we should consider the peculiar situation of neutrals.

According to my conception, neutrality implies, that all nations, so defining themselves, are bound to act with strict impartiality towards belligerents; that is to say, are bound to conduct themselves towards the respective countries at war, exactly in the same manner as they did previously to war. Their rights cannot be extended by the unfortunate situation of the conflicting parties. If neutrals, therefore, had no right to trade with the colonies of our enemies before hostilities commenced, that hostile state cannot, of itself, invest them with that right. Consequently we, the moment we discover its assumption to be in any way injurious to our interests, are warranted in prohibiting its exercise. This we are empowered to do, according to the old doctrines of na-

tional law, as they have long been recognised and practised by all maritime states, and as they are universally laid down by the most eminent publicists of modern times. Thus far we have, all along, been authorized to go. But if a *new* state of things arise, for which *old* regulations are inefficient, we must ordain *new* regulations which are more applicable to the change of circumstances. This is the natural progress of all law. Before an aggression has been made, or an inconvenience felt, the process which may be necessary to prevent or controul it, is not likely to be defined. We should in vain search the statute-book for the punishment of a crime which has never been committed.

Thus, when we find ourselves, in the relation which we bear to the rest of Europe, placed in a situation which our history never before exhibited, it is not to be expected that past occurrences should afford rules and precedents for the regulation of our present conduct. We must bend to existing circumstances, and be governed by their impulsive direction.

When, therefore, we perceive that we are engaged, in no ordinary war, with a powerful and perfidious foe, who conquers as much by the terror of his ordinances as by the force of his arms; who, at the same time, conquers by diplomatic corruption and intrigue, by secret imprisonment, by torture, and assassination, as well as by open assault; by the execution of his barbarous denunciations, as well as by the propagation of his infamous falsehoods; and whose chief aim in conquest, is to elevate himself on the pinnacle of human grandeur, that he may subject the whole earth to the dominion of his destroying sword; that he may every where establish an unrelenting military despotism; and that he may crumble into one undistinguishable heap of rubbish the stately piles of political and civil liberty, and the venerable temples of moral and religious virtue; it surely becomes in us a most sacred and indispensable duty to ward off, by any means with which God and nature have blessed us, the dreadful dispensations of such a destiny. If to avert such deplorable calamities *old modes*

be incompetent, we must adopt *new modes*; if *gentle measures* be inadequate, we must resort to *rigorous measures:* at all events, we must endeavour to avert them.

Are we then, after so long an experiment of forbearance; after the practice of the mildest moderation for fifteen years, an over-scrupulous adherence to which has so infinitely strengthened the great adversary of human kind, to be fearful of resuming our rights? Or should that resumption be insufficient, which under present circumstances I contend it would be, are we to hesitate about proceeding a few steps beyond those limits, which custom and law have already authorized, and within which, the moment the necessity ceased, we should be most happy to return? Ought we to be deterred from this reasonable act of self-defence, because, forsooth, neutrals, who, for a protracted course of years, have been immoderately enriching themselves at our expence, would sustain some trifling additional inconvenience? We have long been fighting not only for ourselves, but for the freedom of Europe, and for the great inte-

rests of mankind all over the world. Our sacrifices to sustain other states have been far from inconsiderable; and if they had not basely deserted their own cause, and retreated like dastards from the field, they would not, at this moment, be groaning under the ponderous chains of the meanest and most sanguinary despot that ever trampled on the pusillanimity of animate creation. And if these neutrals, whom, some insist, we should nurse with so much tender dotage, had possessed a sentiment of manly feeling, they would, long since, have ranged themselves under our sacred banners, and have cordially united with us in this holy warfare. Had they been actuated by the nobler dispositions of our nature, they would, long since, have voluntarily foregone the sordid profits of their mercenary and mendacious contrivances to elude and cheat us. But if they are so dead to the loftier sensations of humanity; if they are so deaf to the prophetic invocations of honour and of glory, we must, at least, place them in a negative position. If they are not to be incited to duty, we must, at least, incapacitate them

from impeding our nobler and more generous views. The losses and inconveniences to which they may be exposed, beyond what they would suffer from the exercise of our rights, according to ancient usage, cannot be very serious; indeed, by the facilities which it would be our interest to grant them in other ways, the balance might be more than restored: nor could we, at all events, deprive them, in a long course of years, of a tythe of the profits which they have reaped from previous indulgence. But were their grievances an hundred times more extensive, such a dreadful necessity as the present existing, it would still be our most incontrovertible and imperative duty to persist. Let me, before I conclude, just put one plain question, by way of further illustration. If Buonaparte were to prevail over this country, can the most bigotted supporter of the system of effeminate moderation conceive, even during the wildest paroxisms of his fancy, that, in six months, there would be a neutral nation upon earth? We are, therefore, contending for their existence as well as for our own, and

ultimately for their rights. We shall only be suspending regulations for the eventual preservation of the old order of things, the full operation of which it would be our happiness and glory to reinstate, and which, if we unfortunately fail, will be doomed to inevitable and irremediable extinction.

Much groundless clamour has been excited against the government, in consequence of that part of the late proclamation* which disavows the right of searching national ships belonging to friendly powers, it having been imagined, that we have conceded an exclusive privilege, which maritime states had hitherto allowed us, and which we had long been in the habit of exercising. This clamour has proceeded from a natural and a laudable feeling, viz. from a jealousy of any dereliction of our naval rights. But the question has been totally misapprehended, which a very little explanation will shew.

* See Proclamation, dated Queen's Palace, Oct. 16, 1807.

It is an invariable, and universally admitted maxim of public law, that, as long as nations continue at peace with each other, they are bound not only to refrain from aggression against their respective territories, but to hold inviolable their respective flags, which are the representatives of their independence at sea. The distinction between a ship of war and a merchant ship, is this, that a ship of war is a part of the sovereign power, and a merchant ship is not. They consequently have distinct offices and distinct rights: but they are in no shape, on an equality. The one carries within its precincts a component part of the sovereignty and independence of the state, to which the other can have no possible pretension. It is this property which authorizes the one to bring to, and examine the other at pleasure, a right which is entirely derived from its character, not from its strength. If a vessel, bearing the flag of the state, be ever so small, holding a commission from the sovereign power of which that flag is the token, the deck from which it is displayed, is to be considered as independent of all foreign jurisdiction

and controul as the territory of the state itself. No other ship can search her, or detain her, or even board her against her consent, without committing an open act of hostility, and as direct a violation of her rights, as if there had been an actual invasion of territorial dominion. If a dispute arise on any point whatever, a claim may no doubt be preferred, but it cannot be enforced, by an individual; and, if not amicably adjusted, the ultimate decision must be referred to his government. In like manner, if two friendly powers, whose dominions are contiguous, have each a fortress on their respective frontier, and part of the garrison desert from one post to the other, the commandant who has lost his men, may certainly demand their restoration; but, should that be refused, he can have no right, of his own free will, to invest the fort, and to endeavour to recover them by force. His duty evidently is to transmit a representation of the injury to his government, and to abide by its directions. If it were otherwise, it would be in the power of any individual to convert a trivial injury into an unpardonable of-

fence, and, whenever he thought fit, to involve his country in war.

We have indeed, at different periods of our history, before the law of nations, as to maritime rights, was properly defined or understood, laid claim to various exclusive privileges, particularly in the time of Cromwell, and during one part of the reign of William III. In remoter times, when a great part of France was annexed to our empire, we assumed a despotic maritime sovereignty, which our power was generally able to enforce, but which was founded on no principles of real justice, and which was regularly resisted by every nation which felt, and could maintain its independence. It would far surpass the bounds of a work of this kind, to go into the history of this celebrated question. Among other pretensions however, that of searching national ships was contended for, and till the time of Charles II. it actually formed a part of the instructions to our naval commanders. But it was never acquiesced in by other powers, and it was, at length, found by us, to be so unjust in

its principle, and so inconvenient in its practice, that it was tacitly renounced. Since that period it has never been revived, except in a few desultory instances, none of which have been authorized by the government.* So far as to the principle. With regard to the practice, if we reflect for a moment, we shall at once perceive its great hardship on others, and its trifling importance to ourselves. If we acknowledge the independence of neutrals, their public rights, generally speaking, must be placed on an equality with our own. Thus, if we insist on searching their national ships, we are bound to allow them the same privilege, unless there be some particular motive, of a very cogent nature, for the refusal. Now with regard to the Americans, we, possessing an hundred ships of war for every one of that description in

* This pretension, which was originally started in very old times, was first abandoned in 1677. About ten years afterwards, James II. attempted to revive it, but it was finally dropped by King William. Since then, which is now above a century ago, it has formed no part of the instructions to our navy, nor has it been ever claimed by any solemn or recorded act.

their service, surely cannot plead any reason of sufficient weight to justify the exception in our favour. And, if we allow the right to be reciprocal, the exercise of it would be considerably to our disadvantage, and would expose us to a very serious additional proportion of molestation. Besides, when we consider, how irritating and vexatious would be the demand on either side, how sensitive power is, and how easily provoked to resistance, we must be aware how frequently it might be attended with bloodshed. It is, therefore, no less consonant with interest than with reason, mutually to relinquish the claim. Even if it had been, on our part, an established right, we could now abandon it with credit, as, from the great disparity between the strength of this country and that of America, there could be no possible chance of our incurring the reproach of timidity. From this spontaneous abandonment of a claim, which we could not be justified in asserting, it must not, however, be inferred, that we have conceded any privilege to which we have a warrantable title. Our dispute with America, and the

causes of that dispute, cannot be in the least affected by the agitation or settlement of an extraneous and accidental occurrence. The question respecting our undoubted right to demand, and to recover British-born subjects in the employ of neutrals, is precisely where it was; nor do we admit of any pretension whatever, on their part, to seduce our seamen from their allegiance to their native land, or to detain them, against our will, in their commercial or national service. But such conduct being legitimate cause of war (should redress on application be denied) we very properly take the adjudication of the injury out of the hands of an individual, who, in all probability, would determine it according to the impulse of momentary feeling, and in whom, without the authority of the supreme powers of the state, it could never naturally nor legally vest, and we place it in the hands of the government, which is the sole tribunal competent to decide on questions of that momentous import.

Nor let it be said, that I am arguing

against my own principles, in order to support the administration in a measure which seems to contradict them. My chief aim, in the foregoing pages, has been to demonstrate the absolute necessity of an immediate and rigorous resumption of our established rights; and also, to point out what, in my opinion, under the present critical circumstances of the world, would be a justification of their extension. But whilst I recommend a *vigour beyond the law*, in cases in which that vigour is dictated by imperious necessity, I also recommend the observance of mildness and conciliation, when it is not likely to be attended with prejudicial effects. In the case before us, that extreme necessity is far from apparent. In this instance, we recede from no ancient right, nor is it requisite that we should establish any new one. The right of searching merchant ships, which we always possessed, we still retain. The right of searching national ships, which we once claimed, but which was never recognized, and which the government has, in point of practice, for above a century, abandoned, we have now,

in consequence of an accidental circumstance, which has revived its discussion, been induced formally to disclaim. British seamen, harboured in American merchantmen, may be numerous, and them we can claim, and take by prescriptive and natural right, without risk of contest, and without committing any offence against national honour. Deserters, sheltered by American ships of war, must, from the pitiful weakness of the American navy, be few; and these we can also claim, in the expectation of their voluntary surrender. But, unless thus given up, we do not permit, on the summary requisition of an individual, an attempt to recover them by force, which could not be executed without an open violation of the independence of the state to which she belongs, and consequently without incurring the risk of instant contention, and of eventual hostility between the two countries. The detriment, generally speaking, can be, surely, neither worthy of the immediate strife, nor of the ultimate hazard; and it is evidently becoming the dignity of all states, acknowledged as independent, to refer casual

complaints, which involve essential interests, to their respective governments, by which alone they are likely to be investigated with sobriety, and settled according to their intrinsic merits.*

* The right of claiming British subjects, who may have engaged in the service of neutrals, or have taken refuge on board their national ships, is perfectly clear and incontrovertible. Should a formal demand of their restoration be made, and rejected, there is indisputably fair cause for war against the offending party, and the government would be justified in instantly issuing instructions to naval commanders to recover them by force. But until that order be given, no individual can be warranted in having recourse to violence. The proclamation is, therefore, under all points of view, correct. What our cabinet may ultimately think fit to do, must depend on the circumstances as they are laid before them. If the Americans insist on any right to detain our seamen in their service, it is evidently our business to go to war, to resist such a pretension; because then, it becomes a point of honour in the first instance independently of all injury, and, if once established as a principle, might, in an ulterior point of view, lead to very prejudicial consequences. If, however, it be a case merely of an accidental nature, which this apparently is, it may, on both sides, be easily explained and repaired. As the maritime strength of the world is at present disposed, it is more for our interest, if it can be done without any sacrifice of honour or right, to either of which, I am satisfied, the present

Thus, whilst the ready abandonment of all pretensions to search neutral ships of war evinces, on the part of our government, a rigid regard to impartial *justice*, when no countervailing duty interferes to impede that inclination, it betrays no disposition whatever to surrender ancient

government will never submit, that it should be amicably settled. Our great object, after all, must be to put a complete end to all neutral commerce, which, either directly or indirectly, assists France. For this I have chiefly contended. And when we consider the insolent, unjust, and outrageous conduct of France towards this country, we are clearly justified in the adoption of any measures, whether authorized by custom or not, to invalidate her views. We have but one enemy to contend with, or to fear. That enemy seeks the accomplishment of his purpose, which is our destruction, by *any means*. We must, therefore, seek to defeat that accomplishment by *those means* which are most likely to insure our success. And this we can evidently do, without in the least participating in his guilt. It is, on our part, not an act of free-will, but of compulsion. The evident distinction is this. He departs from *all rules*, and proceeds to *all extremities*, without necessity; we only depart from *those rules*, and proceed to *those extremities*, which are indispensable to our preservation. And if this be not our duty, nothing can be our duty, which tends to promote or secure civil liberty, domestic happiness, or political independence.

and incontrovertible rights. The expedition to Zealand, indeed, not only removes any such fear, but it affords an adequate pledge that they will venture beyond the literal construction of such rights, whenever the safety of the country is endangered, and the necessity of the case is sufficiently urgent to justify the deviation. Notwithstanding all that has been advanced, by misconception on one side, and by party animosity on the other, I maintain, that both these measures are the result of a steady, wise, dignified, and consistent plan; that, instead of diminishing, they ought materially to increase our confidence in the exertions of the present government; and that they evince a firmness which is resolved to act up to the discharge of duty, unmoved by the ephemeral breath of popular censure or applause.

In our conduct towards Copenhagen, we have, indeed, been reproached, by a small but active and vociferous faction, with following the exact footsteps of Buonaparte.* I have, I hope, already explained

* Without at all adverting to Buonaparte's innumerable acts of hostility against neutrals, to excuse our

this measure sufficiently to satisfy every unprejudiced mind; and such malignant aspersions we shall, I trust, ever treat with the disdain which they deserve.* We may

conduct towards the Danes, we can, in their own proceedings within the last few years, produce a case precisely in point. During our short rupture with them in the year 1801, as a member of the northern maritime confederacy, which, under the auspices of the emperor Paul, so suddenly started up against our naval rights, they sent an army commanded by the Prince of Hesse to take possession of Hamburgh, a neutral and independent state, with which they had never had any dispute, and which had never given them a cause of complaint, urging as their reason for the measure, the necessity of obstructing the trade and navigation of the English on the Elbe, and justifying it, by the imperious and unavoidable pressure of circumstances. See Prince of Hesse's declaration to the council of Hamburgh, on withdrawing his troops, dated May 20th, 1801.

* It must be highly gratifying to every one who feels an interest in the honour of the British character to learn, that, on the evacuation of Zealand by our army, general Peymann sent two letters to lord Cathcart, expressive, not only of his approbation but of his astonishment, at the rigid discipline which had been every where preserved. A great many of our troops were, from necessity, stationed in the palace and gardens belonging to his Danish majesty at Fredericksberg; but such was their complete good conduct, that not a picture nor a piece of furniture was in the least injured, nor was a tree in the gardens mutilated. Even

be impelled to the adoption of a harsh or even a violent measure, for the just attainment of a grand political object, in resisting and frustrating the designs of a base and infuriated foe; but, our object secured, we shall commit no unnecessary aggression, for the gratification of sordid avarice, or unprincipled revenge. We shall never, I feel confident, act with cruelty towards other states, merely because they are unable to resist us; nor shall we ever make power, separated from other considerations, constitute right. This would be a barbarous exertion of brutal strength, which is totally foreign to

the inhabitants of Copenhagen, civil as well as military, were so thoroughly satisfied with the behaviour both of our officers and men, that before they separated, the greatest harmony prevailed. Let the opponents of government, who have so malignantly endeavoured to defame their country, compare this with the progress of Buonaparte's arms. Let them recollect the excesses of his troops in every quarter. Let them particularly recollect the contributions which were levied at Hamburgh, and the horrors which were committed at Lubeck, and let them no longer disgrace themselves by attempting to blend the principles or acts of British policy with those of France.

British ideas; which would reflect an indelible stigma on the hitherto untarnished honour of the country; and which would assimilate us in character with the profligate despot of France.

London, Nov. 4, 1807.

By the orders in Council, dated November 11,* our Government has at length had recourse in part, to those just measures of retaliation, which the unprovoked and insolent aggressions of our enemy have so long and so loudly called for. As far as these orders go, they will, no doubt, be found serviceable, both in assisting ourselves and in distressing France; but I cannot help lamenting that they have not gone further. All commerce with the colonies of our enemies, except perhaps such as was permitted by France previously to the commencement of the present war, should have been strictly prohibited, nor should

* See the Supplement to the London Gazette, dated November 16, 1807.

any article, under any pretence whatever, have been suffered to be transported from those settlements to Europe. Neutral states being allowed, by the present regulations, to keep up an unrestrained intercourse with the colonies of our enemies, and to bring the produce of them directly to Great Britain or to the countries to which their vessels belong, will easily contrive to convey a considerable part of it to hostile ports. They have already shewn the fertility of their skill at deception, and, whenever they meet with our cruizers, they will still have their false certificates to produce. Trieste and Fiume, if they are to be regarded as neutral ports, are so contiguous to the chief harbours of the Adriatic, that it will be difficult to ascertain the real destination of ships steering in that direction, and the short distance of our own coast from that of France and Holland must expose us, in a far more serious degree, to the same inconvenience. The risk, and with the risk the expence of neutral aid, will, no doubt, be greatly increased to our enemies, but I fear that they

will still reap from it considerable advantages.

This measure of our government is, however, for the present, avowedly experimental; and unless found sufficiently effective, materially to impede and circumscribe the illicit traffic against which it is directed, a more rigorous mode will, in all likelihood, be resorted to. Yet, after the inconvenience and prejudice which we have already experienced from our indulgence, I cannot understand the policy of hesitating about the full resumption of our rights, by literally confining the intercourse of neutrals to those regulations which were prescribed by France and her dependents, whilst they remained at peace. In this instance, therefore, we continue to shew an ill-judged lenity, and to concede incontrovertible claims.

The only particular in which, by these orders, we depart from established custom, is in declaring France subject to the restrictions of blockade, without actually keeping up a blockading squadron, and

by such declaration, rendering every neutral ship, which attempts to enter a French port, unless she have a clearance from this country, liable to capture. But this we are evidently justified in doing, not only in consequence of Buonaparte's orders to a similar effect against the British empire; but in consequence of the readiness with which neutrals have obeyed it. The effect, indeed, which has been given to his decree, is entirely attributable to their acquiescence. Without their assistance, it would have been a mere verbal nullity; for, destitute as France is of naval vigour, she could in no shape have rendered it efficacious. With their assistance, however, it has been converted into a most serious grievance. The mere declaration of Buonaparté, that this country was in a state of blockade, whilst at the same time he dared not send a single ship to sea to attempt to enforce it, as long as he continued destitute of extraneous aid, could be regarded as nothing more than a piece of empty and nonsensical bombast, by its complete impotency, exposing its author to ridicule

and contempt. But when the context comes to be taken into consideration, which subjects to confiscation, not only all British property discovered on board neutral ships, but even all ships and cargoes, of whatsoever nation, if they have visited a British port, a substance and consequence are imparted to the decree, which, through the contravention of neutral rights, strikes at the very vitality of our foreign trade. From their acquiescence, therefore, Buonaparte's regulations derive all their importance.

At first view, it seems quite incomprehensible, how neutral states could be brought to a compliance with such an outrageous violation of their most obvious privileges. To resist an innovation, by which the leading principles of neutrality were completely subverted, was surely a conduct to be expected from those who, whenever Great Britain has been concerned, have shewn the most stubborn and sensitive jealousy of their maritime immunities. But our relations with them happened to be on a very different foot-

ing. By yielding to us, nothing was to be gained. We had a commercial shipping to carry on our own trade, and a warlike navy to protect it. France had neither. She consequently required the assistance of neutrals to bring home the produce of her transmarine possessions. The proposal was readily agreed to, and the connexion having been properly methodized, the parties have derived from it a mutual benefit. The Americans in particular, who had secured the largest share, had most accurately ascertained its value. By yielding, therefore, to France, they knew that they had much to preserve, and, setting honour entirely out of sight, the great balance of profit in their favour easily reconciled them to a metaphysical forfeiture, especially as this country, which they have always regarded with envy and hatred, was chiefly exposed to its substantial operation. They only had the disgrace which, from their insensibility to character, they considered as nothing; but we had the pecuniary loss which, from their attachment to lucre, they considered as every thing.

This grovelling conduct on the part of America, which is a nation of mere traders, may be easily accounted for, when the extent is stated to which she has carried on this injurious traffic. Shortly after the renewal of the war, in 1803, the French government, in consequence of our decided naval superiority, perceiving the utter impossibility of bringing home, under the protection of the national flag, its colonial produce, made over to America the whole of its commercial marine, on condition that it should be restored, at a valuation, within twelve months after the conclusion of the war.* These ships, though strictly belonging to France, have been since suffered to navigate under American colours, and have been the principal carriers of the colonial produce of our enemies to the mother countries. We may form a judgment of the extent to which this trade has been pushed, when

* See Mr. Lowe's Inquiry into the State of the British West Indies, in which he cites the evidence of Mr. Wilson, before the West India committee, in July, 1807, page 118.

the Americans themselves acknowledge, that the amount of their foreign exportations (which with the exception of a few European and East India goods, are almost entirely the produce of the colonies of our enemies) annually surpasses 14,000,000 *l.* ster.* From other documents it appears, that in the year 1806, no less than 211 sail of American vessels entered the port of Amsterdam alone, where they unloaded, besides other articles to a considerable amount, 45,000 hogsheads of sugar, and 34,000 hogsheads of coffee. We have further to consider, that the whole of this property is conveyed to our enemies' ports at a peace freight and insurance, whilst we are paying a war freight and insurance for every similar article which we receive, making a difference against ourselves of at least 20 per cent.

The mystery respecting the conduct of the Americans, is thus completely unravelled. Having no objection to barter na-

* See New York Gazette, dated March 13th, 1807.

tional honour for commercial profit, they receive the full price of their submission. Such an example however, can never be thought worthy of our imitation, nor can any one pretend to assert that their acquiescence should be the forerunner of ours. If they basely chuse to relinquish the claims of their own independence, we must at least take care, as far as we are involved in the consequences, to provide a remedy. If they are the chief instruments of mischief, it is surely no more than fair that they should sustain some part of the penalty. What is due to Buonaparte's insolence, is no less due to their pusillanimity. Had they, in the outset, manfully opposed the invasion of their rights, we should have supported them in the contest; but influenced as they have been in their determination by the selfish motives of interest and fear, it becomes our business to point out their error, by shewing them that a nation can never depart with safety from the principles of honour and justice; and by convincing them, that if Buonapar-

te's power can procure them a temporary advantage, our power can inflict on them a lasting injury.

Scarcely was the ink dry with which I had written the above, when intelligence arrived of the fresh events which are unfolding themselves on the theatre of continental politics, of which Buonaparte is at length declared the sole and supreme manager. His associates will not, however, I imagine, have much reason to congratulate themselves on the appointment to which they have subscribed, as his patent is during life, and as from the specimen which he has already given of his disposition, he is not likely to arrange the drama to the satisfaction of the spectators, nor to manage the fund for the general advantage of the concern. By some fatality, every representation under his direction is stripped of attraction. Comedy is without grace, tragedy without dignity, and farce without humour. These are, indeed, wonder-

working times in which we live. The sphere of human action is retrograde, and the nature of man reversed. Baseness and humiliation of sentiment are become concomitants of elevated rank; and in the ordinary occurrences of life, in the most trivial as well as the most weighty, there is a mixture of ferocious and clownish extravagance, that overshades every amiable or commendable instinct of the soul. If things proceed much longer in this lamentable course, the corruption will be universal; and, amidst the trembling crowds of continental slaves, there will not be the semblance of a gentleman or of a man of honour left.

Every day continues to furnish accounts of some act of increased outrage on the part of Buonaparte, and of increased servility on the part of his royal colleagues. They seem to be trying which shall forge the strongest chain, or advance, with the most headlong precipitancy, to a state of deplorable vassalage. Austria is already a member of the confederacy, and Russia may be expected soon to join the infatuated and infamous phalanx. Portugal, for

acting with honour towards an old and faithful ally, is doomed to destruction; and the king of Sweden, who among all the continental sovereigns, has alone displayed the magnanimity of an hero, surrounded as he is by purchased or terrified governments, can scarcely hope for salvation.

But of all the plots which, in the records of human villany, have ever been contrived to gorge the voracity of atrocious ambition, that which has been determined on, by the base and prolific ingenuity of Buonaparte, to ruin the Spanish branch of the house of Bourbon, has a just claim to pre-eminence. To take advantage of the imbecillity of a father, by insinuating suspicion into the sanctuary of domestic confidence, and, by imposing on his credulity, to provoke him to accuse his own son of a design to assassinate him; is one of those complex productions of diabolical fraud, which could never have entered into the imagination of any man, who was not already totally lost to the faintest feelings of humanity, and who

was not rendered familiar, by his crimes, with every refinement of wickedness.

When we consider Buonaparte's success, and the truly wonderful manner in which it has been wrought, we can hardly refrain from thinking, that, for some mysterious, but just purpose, he has been upheld by a power which is beyond the reach of human controul. Yet when, on the other hand, we reflect on the infinite mercy of that Power, how slow he is in wrath, and how quick in forgiveness, the measure of suffering seems irreconcileable with the ostensible principles of his government, and the punishment apparently exceeds the offence. Unhappily, we can trace a great part of the misfortunes which have overwhelmed the world, in the conduct of the sufferers; and until the generous feelings of mankind are roused from torpidity, and operate a complete change in the tide of public opinion, it is in vain to speculate on their emancipation, or even to hope for a remedy against increasing calamity.

This nation is now the only point of resistance left; to overcome which, all the energies of the world may perhaps be soon concentered. Whilst Buonaparte's ambition is incessantly urging him to attempt our subjugation, that he may indulge in the unrestrained gratification of his envy, his pride, his hatred, his avarice, his cruelty, and his revenge, those whom he has enslaved, will possibly cordially assist him in his object, that we may no longer be a reproach to their pusillanimity, and that we may share in their misery and disgrace. It is the uniform characteristic of culpable degradation, to envy those who have been preserved by their worth, and to be desirous of reducing them to their own ignominious level. But I firmly trust, that we shall not shrink from the glorious distinction which, under the blessings of Providence, our virtues have acquired for us, and that, knowing the inestimable value of the possession, we shall never submit to its loss. Never, I am confident, shall we desert the sacred cause which is intrusted to our defence; but, as our enemies increase, we shall more strenuously assert

our rights, and more demonstratively prove their inability to crush us.

Things cannot for ever continue in a state of deterioration. There is fortunately a point beyond which calamity cannot extend; and the effects of Buonaparte's rapacious violence and sanguinary coercion, must shortly reduce a great portion of mankind to such consummate wretchedness, that death will be preferable to life, and a desperate effort may then be expected to be made, to rid the world of his intolerable yoke. The period is possibly not very remote, when the hollow pedestal which supports the column of his power shall give way, and when it shall be doomed to crumble faster than it has been reared. But should this desirable event be yet long delayed, let us still resolve to acquit ourselves of our duties. By yielding, every thing *must* be forfeited; by persevering, every thing *may* be gained. Can we then hesitate about the choice?

If it be an awful, it is also a sublime and majestic spectacle to contemplate the progress of our fortune and our fame; to observe this little but illustrious island,

expanding in glory, as its difficulties multiply; to observe it forming a solitary exception in the midst of general depravity, and deriving additional splendour from the obscurity by which it is surrounded; to observe it, whilst assailed by a host of confederate nations, calmly surveying the storm, and indignantly defying the utmost efforts of its fury.

Let us, then, banish, not only from our expectations, but from our wishes, all thoughts of peace with Buonaparte. Whilst, indeed, there is a particle of masculine vigour about us; whilst there is a spark of generosity, of candour, or of justice unextinguished in our breasts; whilst we retain the faintest attachment to our religion or our laws, to our personal freedom or our political independance; whilst, in fine, there is a drop of genuine British blood flowing in our veins; we must abhor an act that has the semblance of reconciliation with a monster, who has paved his way to power by the commission of every crime which can stain the

human character; who, as he has advanced in the career of fortune, has receded from the standard of virtue; and who, in proportion as he has ascended in the climax of rank, has plunged more deeply into the abyss of wickedness.

London, November 25, 1807.

POSTSCRIPT

TO THE

FIFTH EDITION.

I DID not imagine that I should have any thing further to add to the foregoing publication, but as it still continues in request, I naturally feel desirous of rendering it as complete as I can, up to the present date. Events of the highest interest continue to unfold themselves with an accelerated rapidity, which, to my optics, is visibly tending to the catastrophe destined to close the stupendous drama which has, for so many years, been acting on the moral theatre of life. The tyrant of Europe has evidently nearly reached the limits of his baneful career: he has nearly exhausted all the modes and devices, of which he has been so abundant an author, of vexing, destroying, and trampling on

mankind. The torments of his slaves are becoming too acute for silent submission, and even the terror of his denunciations can no longer suppress the ejaculations of despair.

The Dutch, who owed all their power, and, in great measure, their existence to commerce, have, at length, been reduced, by Buonaparte's forced loans and prohibitory decrees, to the last stage of beggary. They describe their situation in terms not to be mistaken, and the accuracy of which even the usurper at the head of their government has been compelled to acknowledge.* Millions besides the Dutch must be suffering nearly in a similar degree, and will, no doubt, ere long, also manifest their feelings. When our late orders in council come to be enforced in full efficacy, they cannot fail to convince the continental states of the inadequacy of Buonaparte's power, compared with that of Great Britain, in the regulation and controul of commercial concerns.

* See the report of the proceedings of the legislative body, with their address to Louis Buonaparte and his answer, dated Utrecht, Nov. 14, and Dec. 5, 1807.

His authority and vigilance can only extend to the importations on his coast; and, however he may threaten or ordain, the ocean will be deaf to his voice, and will still be the bearer of British industry and arts to the remotest regions of the globe.* He must, therefore, confine himself to his continental arrangements, which, alas! afford him a field sufficiently ample for the exercise of his impious propensities. His fears for his personal safety administer a perpetual nutriment to the grossness and versa-

* Nothing can afford a clearer demonstration of Buonaparte's opinion of the efficacy of these new regulations than the frantic rage which is displayed in his *imperial* decree, dated Milan, Dec. 17, 1807. The petulant violence of his passion is of that peculiar nature, that the range of language is not of sufficient scope to express it, and he is reduced to the necessity of coining a new word (denationaliser) for the occasion. But whilst he is fulminating his interdicts and excommunications against us, he would do well to recollect, that he is not pope Innocent III., neither is this the commencement of the 13th century. Our superstition is not likely to give effect to his anathemas, and when he talks so bigly, it might be of some service to his cause, if he would graciously condescend to inform the world, in what manner, or by what means, his threats are to be enforced.

tility of his conceptions, and his progress in his political tours, exhibits a kind of rotatory succession of creation and abolition. What one month produces, the next annihilates, to be speedily replaced by some more atrocious novelty. He thus goes on, erecting and subverting, enacting and expunging, with indefatigable industry and endless variety; dictating his arbitrary decrees; plundering and parcelling out subdued kingdoms; harassing and destroying prostrate nations. These are pursuits, which are congenial to the sentiments of his heart, and the views of his mind; but his nature must be totally reversed, before he can be expected to institute any system of government, which is calculated to promote the tranquillity, or comfort, or prosperity of those who have been surrendered to his sway. All his speculations originate and terminate in the disgusting selfishness of his depraved and brutal appetites. Nothing good, or generous, or great, can mingle with the foul stream of his passions. He is a scourge to punish the sins, and not a protector to assuage the miseries, of the human race.

The wisdom and energy of the present administration have, however, in many respects, counteracted his ambitious projects, and, having once turned the tide of his success, may possibly be the instrument of his downfall.

Buonaparte has been long convinced, that nothing effectual can be attempted against the independence of this empire, whilst we preserve our present decisive superiority at sea. Under this persuasion, he had matured a plan of uniting the separate fleets of the other maritime states of Europe against this chief bulwark of our national defence. After the signature of the peace of Tilsit, he could depend on the co-operation of Russia: his negotiations with Denmark anticipated the junction of the naval strength of that power: Sweden, who was not to be corrupted, was to be subdued: and Portugal was regarded as a prey which might at any time be secured. Of these four subsidiaries, Russia has, however, alone fulfilled his expectations. Of the Danish marine, by the operations of a British army and fleet before the Danish capital, he has been unexpectedly

deprived: the heroic king of Sweden continues firm to his engagements, and rejects with disdain all association of interest with the imperial robber and assassin: and the royal family of Portugal, with their army, navy, and treasure, have been transferred, under the protection of a British squadron, and by the address of the British government, beyond the reach of his molestation.* This resolution to change the seat of empire has been worthy of the name of Braganza; and, amidst the fallen dignity of royal rank, it is a high consolation to see two princes, one, the descendant of Gustavus Vasa, who rescued Sweden from the tyranny of the Danes; the other, sprung from the duke of Braganza, who liberated Portugal from the Spanish yoke, acting up to the glory of their illustrious

* I have not lengthened this work, by entering into a discussion of the vast commercial advantages which this grand event must open to the wealth and industry of this empire, because they are sufficiently evident, and must, at once, suggest themselves to every mind. It will very soon, in this view, more than compensate for any losses which our merchants and manufacturers have sustained from the tyrannic restrictions of the base Corsican.

ancestors, braving every danger, encountering every toil, and submitting to every privation, rather than be polluted by a connexion, even of nominal cordiality, with the vilest and most opprobrious of mankind.

How different, how lamentably different, in the estimation of all whose estimation is honorable, has been the conduct of the Russian emperor. He, who was lately idolized as the valiant champion of the violated rights of humanity, as the hope and refuge of the feeble and destitute, from what a majestic height has he fallen. From being the repeller of injustice, to become the accomplice of the unjust; from being the shield against oppression, to become the sharer of the oppressor's spoils; from being the ally of George III. and the British people, to become the friend and tool of Buonaparte and his gang of marauding executioners, is one of those revolutions in the human character, which extorts compassion for a credulity that could be so deceived, and contempt for an abjectness that could stoop so low. His majesty's declaration in answer to the

Russian manifesto, is a most eloquent and powerful appeal both to the heart and the understanding;* and if the emperor Alexander have any nobility of sentiment left, it must awaken in his breast the deepest remorse and shame. It must make him smart under the contemplation of forfeited greatness, and, by pointing out to him the wide interval between his late honourable independence and his present ignominious captivity, must create an eager inclination to sever himself from an unnatural confederacy, and to be restored to the friendship, alliance, and respect of a great and generous nation.

Splendid as have been the fortunes of this empire, throughout its history, never was it before exalted to such an eminence as that which it at present occupies. Whilst the other powers of Europe have been either forced or cheated out of their independence, we find ourselves, in this sixteenth year of the most bitter and expensive war that was ever waged, flourishing, with in-

* See his Majesty's declaration dated Westminster, Dec. 18, 1807.

creased strength, and undiminished resources; not only equal to the maintenance of our own rights, and the defence of our own liberties, but able to afford consolation and support to our discomfited allies. It does make the soul expand with generous warmth, when we contemplate our own pre-eminence in the scale of human importance. Attachment to our native soil is an instinctive feeling, partaken in common by every individual of the habitable earth. It is a feeling, associated with the recollection of every varying season and incident of life, and with all the endearing relations, of our family, our kindred, and our friends. But how must that sentiment be ennobled and refined, when these tender and captivating sympathies of private affection are blended with every thing that is estimable or illustrious in the loftier sphere of public celebrity and virtue; in government, in religion, in morals, in laws, in arms, in science, and in arts! Can any Britain even think that he is a member of such a community, without being inspired with the ardour and devotion which are requisite to eternise its du-

ration. Next to my God, I do adore my country. If it be an error of superstition, the transgression must at least be a pardonable one, for within the sacred precincts of this my native land, I find comprehended every earthly object of human interest or desire, all that is most dear to my feelings, and most gratifying to my pride.

Without pretending to decypher the mysterious page of futurity, I yet may be permitted to reason from the analogy of past story, and to deduce probable conclusions from occurrences which are actually passing in review. In the natural, as in the moral world, harmony and order frequently succeed the most violent convulsions, and, as happier times have preceded, we may hope that they will follow, the throes and agonies with which the race of man has been visited. For myself, I feel thoroughly convinced, that if our constancy and patience do not desert us; if we but continue stedfast to those transcendent duties which seem both to solicit and to command our exertions; and if, acting up to the divine impulse of patriotic affection, we have the manliness to resist the fatal allure-

ments of an insidious peace, our fortunes will ultimately prevail. And here let me most seriously deprecate every inclination to refer our cause to the decision of any foreign jurisdiction. We, who are the best judges of our interests and our rights, are also best able to assert them. Let us then most cautiously beware of being entrapped by offers of mediation. Honour is too delicate a possession to be trusted out of our own keeping, and, above all, should we be jealous of confiding it to the guardianship of those, who have proved themselves so little competent to the protection of their own. Where, indeed, are we to look for a power likely to be an impartial and effective arbitrator for this country? The age is past, when justice poised her scales with equal weights, and when the reciprocal claims of parties were fairly balanced. What was formerly obtained from the equity of governments, must be now extorted from their fears, and we must conquer with our swords, before we can venture to negotiate with our pens.

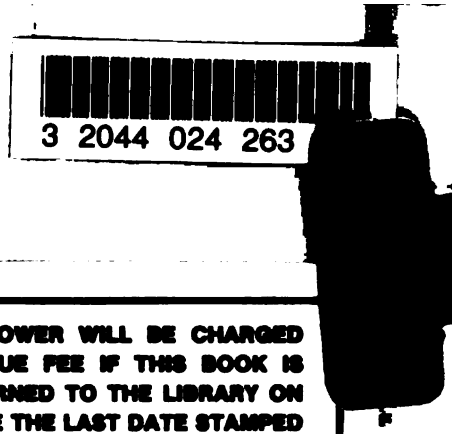
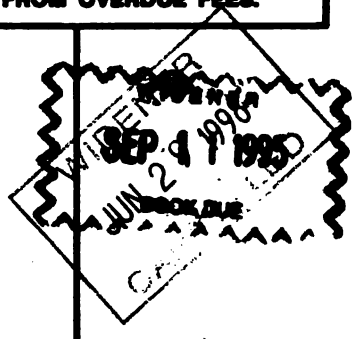
The burdens of war are, no doubt, severely felt; but it is impossible to reflect on the nature and character of the contest in which we are engaged, without being convinced, that the evil is unavoidable, and that it is only to be mitigated for the present, or terminated eventually, by renovated and indefatigable exertion. Considerable, however, as our sufferings have been in the abstract, they vanish almost into nothingness, when contrasted with those by which other states, and even France herself, have been cursed. The bravery and skill of our heroic defenders have hitherto, by the blessings of Providence, afforded us an ample protection, and have averted from our shores the tumult and carnage of conflicting hosts. The inhabitants of this peaceful isle have not yet beheld hostility in its terrific guise. Our fields have not been laid waste, nor our churches profaned, nor our houses ransacked, nor our persons abused. No despotic master has hitherto subverted our public institutions, nor has a licentious soldiery, the bearers of pillage, murder, and rape, invaded the pri-

vacy of our domestic retirement. Shall we then be insensible to the value of such inestimable blessings, or incur the risk of their loss by neglecting the means of their preservation? Is the thought for a moment to be endured, that Britons shall be outvied by any other people in the enthusiasm of patriotic devotion? Least of all, is the idea to be tolerated, that Frenchmen shall persist, with keener ardour, in the propagation of vice, than Britons in the vindication of virtue; that they shall make more powerful efforts in support of a barbarous and impious usurper, than we, in defence of a legitimate and benevolent king; that they shall contend more strenuously for the prolongation of an odious despotism, than we, for the security of a free constitution; that they, in fine, shall be stimulated to encounter more hazards and difficulties to overthrow our independence, than we, to perpetuate its enjoyment. Our whole history flatly contradicts every such supposition; nor is it to be imagined, that the additional benefits which have been acquired by the present

generation should have diminished or relaxed that fervent veneration and attachment, which Britons have invariably manifested for the laws and the liberties of their country.

London, January 7, 1808.

THE END.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